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# STATESMAN AND NATION

## The Week-end Review

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# IMPASSE IN THE DOCKS

A STRONG Government, whatever its political complexion, can count on ultimate success in breaking a sectional strike which becomes a direct challenge to its authority. A wise Government, particularly if its basis is Social-Democratic, endeavours, by timely and tactful action, to prevent such a challenge being raised. We have previously argued that the course of expediency, if not principle, would have been for the Government to work the "black" Canadian ships by troops, and thus enable the Dock Labour Board to accept the men's offer to load and unload all other vessels. As it is, the issue has now become wretchedly confused. The men are firmly persuaded that the employers have locked them out because of the sympathetic action which they took in support of the Canadian Seamen's Union; the rights and wrongs of the Canadian strike are almost forgotten in what is now a local quarrel; and though the whole panoply of Emergency Regulations has been invoked, goods are still not moving freely through the Port of London. All that we have is the fantastic spectacle of 16 ships, which the dockers were quite prepared to work, on their terms, being loaded and unloaded by troops, while over 100 other ships are held up.

The Government's handling of this dispute has placed its supporters in an intolerable moral dilemma. They cannot want to see the Government defeated and humiliated; and everyone must deplore the paralysing of the London docks at a moment of acute economic crisis. On the other hand, Mr. Isaacs has done little either to explain the Government's case to the dockers or to allay their suspicions that he is merely backing employers and trade union officials in whom they have lost confidence. By first remaining neutral on the ground that "normal machinery" must not be by-passed, then letting the situation drift into a complete deadlock and, finally, intervening in the most violent way to frustrate a "Communist conspiracy," Mr. Isaacs has revealed the chronic weakness of Trade Union leaders transferred from the industrial to the Parliamentary scene. Complete *laissez-faire* while a solution was possible, followed by Emergency Regulations when the prestige of both sides had become deeply involved, could only produce the most dangerous results. The best the Government can now hope for is that the men will ultimately go back to work—embittered and resentful. This is a very poor best, under a Labour Government.

The Government may well be right in claiming that, but for active agitation by Communist militants, the stoppage would not have grown to its present dimensions nor shifted so obdurately from port to port. The Emergency Regulations certainly give the authorities ample powers to suppress Communist "sabotage"; and if the Docks Emergency Committee can succeed in recruiting enough volunteers, the strike can presumably be broken. But this does not mean that the use of the Emergency Proclamation was wise or, indeed, necessary. This move has already envenomed and widened the dispute and increased the obduracy of angry men who to-day consider that the State machine is being used to break their solidarity. If the strikers should have considered the critical economic situation of the country, so should the Government. To fight out an issue which has now moved from the realm of reason into that of emotion and "face" is something which neither the country nor a Socialist Government can afford.

The recurrence of these bitter unofficial strikes in the docks casts grave doubts on the adequacy of the present Dock Labour Board machinery of administration. The participation of Union leaders in dock management, and their consequent alienation from the rank-and-file, may have been a grave mistake. This is a matter for consideration when the present stoppage is over. Meanwhile, much milk has been spilt. Having asserted the authority of the State, the Government cannot "surrender," and this is a fact which, we trust, the unofficial strike leaders will be wise enough to recognise. It is futile for organised labour to challenge the State unless it is prepared to face the revolutionary implications. The London dockers are not revolutionaries; nor, whatever may be the *arrière pensée* of a small "political" nucleus, are they out to wreck their country's economy. If the Government presses the issue inflexibly, in the end the dockers can be defeated, however barren the victory which the State achieves. At the moment the men are fighting for what they believe to be vital Trade Union principles. It will be a bankruptcy of statesmanship if they are driven to present a political challenge whose logical consequences they certainly have not considered, and do not intend.

### Australian Unrest

The strike by the Australian Miners' Federation is now in its third week. It has already created serious difficulties both for industry and the urban population, who have had to accept drastic cuts in fuel supplies in the middle of winter. The Labour Government, faced with this crisis, has secured sweeping emergency powers and has not hesitated to use them in an effort to break this strike, which it condemns as a disruptive Communist stratagem. The strike was called by the Miners' Federation, which is undoubtedly under Communist leadership, in support of its demands for a thirty-five-hour week, long-service leave, and a wage increase of thirty shillings a week. These demands were already before the industry's own arbitration tribunal when the Federation held a strike ballot and then, on June 27, took direct action. This, the Government considered, was

illegal, and therefore the funds of the miners' union were frozen. Two of the miners' leaders have since been sent to prison for refusing to surrender money withdrawn before the strike—an action which has provoked protest strikes by dockers and seamen. A raid was also made on the Communist headquarters, and a number of Communist officials have been arraigned for secreting funds which, the Government alleges, were to be used to support the strike. Other charges against the Communists may be made. The Labour Government believes that the time has come for a showdown with the Communists in the trade unions who have been leading rank-and-file unrest against the wage-freeze and the official arbitration system. Mr. Chifley, however, has so far resisted demands for the suppression of the Communists, arguing that to drive them underground would make them more dangerous and that prosecution for actual offences is more effective than blanket outlawry. Yet neither the campaign against the Communists nor the Government's efforts to break the strike have been successful. The miners seem ready to hold out indefinitely and a protracted strike would create very serious economic disorganisation. One side must give way. But can Mr. Chifley, in an election year, surrender to a strike which he has branded as an illegal Communist conspiracy against Australian democracy?

### Dollars and the Commonwealth

The Commonwealth Finance Ministers who have been meeting in London this week can have got little enough enlightenment from the communiqué issued from Chequers on Sunday after the close of the British-American-Canadian discussions. The only point of substance in the Chequers statement was that "in this connection"—that is, in connection with the immediate emergency—"no suggestion was made that sterling be devalued." For the rest, there was a great deal about the long-term objective of restoring the conditions of multilateral trading and exchange, one reference to the need for maintaining full employment, and a statement that the Ministers would meet again in September and that meanwhile "technical and fact-finding discussions" would take place between the three Governments. The world was told that "all agreed that remedies other than financial assistance such as that provided by the United States and Canada must be explored." Quite, quite; but what remedies? It looks as if the Commonwealth Ministers will have no alternative to concerting drastic steps for economy in dollar expenditure, if they are to keep the sterling group in being. But such steps are bound to be highly unwelcome, not only to Canada, but also to most of the other countries concerned, as well as to Great Britain. To India, for example, they mean continuance of living from hand to mouth, and further postponement of the big development projects which are vital to the country's future. The Commonwealth Ministers are in no position to solve the crisis that faces the Western world: only the Americans can do that, and even they can do it only by throwing down their tariff barriers, importing more, and at the same time either giving more than ever or—if they prefer—making vast loans which are most unlikely ever to be repaid.

### Wages Front

As we anticipated last week, the railwaymen's case has gone to a Conciliation Board, with the consent of the N.U.R. Delegate Meeting, and there has been no "go slow" movement this week, except on a small scale at Manchester. Trouble, however, is pretty certain to recur unless the Board recommends something a good deal better than the Railway Executive's last offer; and, if it does, there is still no indication of the source from which the money is to come. Meanwhile, the Mineworkers' Conference, despite a warning speech from its President, has decided without a dissenting vote to go forward with a new wage-claim for "a substantial increase in minimum rates for all lower-paid workers." Mr. Horner somewhat wishfully suggested that "some of the benefits going to the better-paid workers should be used to give more to the lower-paid men"; but it would be surprising if any agreement on these lines could actually be reached. The miners have received, for good reasons, highly favourable treatment in respect of wages as compared with most other workers; and if their minimum rates were raised for them it would be difficult to resist pressure from many other groups which have been held back so far in response to appeals from the Government and the T.U.C. The Chancellor will doubtless continue to insist that any general, or widespread, rise in minimum rates at this stage could only add to the difficulties of Great Britain's external situation and reinforce the pressure from the Americans to devalue the pound. This, were it done, would amount to an all-round wages cut much bigger than any advance the workers could hope to secure as an offset.

### Mr. Deakin and the Communists

The decision of the Transport and General Workers to ban members of the Communist Party from all official positions in the Union, voluntary as well as salaried, sets no new precedent, for a number of smaller Unions have already acted in the same way. The great size, however, of the T. and G.W., and the strength of Communist influence in some of its sections, make the decision very important, and likely to lead to a big struggle, especially among the dockers. Apart from the London strike, there is much explosive material on dock-side and in some other branches of the transport services. Many port employers would like to smash the dock labour scheme; and, despite the benefits it confers, the men acutely dislike some of its features of regimentation. Nevertheless, outside the dock and road transport section the vast Union consists mainly of much more quiescent bodies of workers, so that its central policy remains firmly in the hands of Mr. Deakin and his peaceable colleagues.

### World Sanity

One glint of sanity in international affairs is the priority which the World Health Organisation attaches to mental health. Within its restricted budget it has arranged for inquiries into the provision for mental health in member States—including the psychic jungle of India, with its 400,000,000 people undergoing the stresses of emergent nationhood and the clash of modern civilisation with age-old superstitution. This is a case of an international organisation giving a lead to the nations themselves, since everywhere mental health is a suspect subject. Its assertion, through W.H.O., is a triumph for the World Federation of Mental Health, the voluntary organisation established after the successful international congress in London last year which produced a programme so practical that it has been accepted as the working prospectus of W.H.O. With inadequate funds and a small but enthusiastic staff led by the President, Dr. J. R. Rees, in London, it has made its impact not only on W.H.O. but on Unesco, with which it is co-operating on "tensions leading to war"—academic, perhaps, but of sane intention.

### Rationalising the Prospector

The world is mining metals faster than it is finding new deposits, and every day the industrial demand increases. As Sir Henry Tizard pointed out in his Presidential address to the Empire Mining and Metallurgical Congress, which is now meeting to consider this problem, in his own lifetime more irreplaceable minerals have been dissipated than in the whole previous history of the world. That does not mean that the supplies are necessarily giving out. Sir Henry calculated that in the earth's crust, to a depth of one mile, the total volume is 60,000,000 cubic miles, from which we have taken less than 20 cubic miles of coal since the world began, over one cubic mile of petroleum and about one cubic mile of ores extracted for their metals. But it means that discovery cannot now be left to the lone prospector, with his burro and his hammer. It means the use of the most scientific methods and expert geologists to find deposits at depth. And that is where the British Commonwealth is lacking. Vast areas of the Colonial empire have not even been geologically surveyed and mineral exploration, over vast continental tracts, has been left to a handful of field geologists. These are in short supply or are snapped up by the big corporations intent on working existing concessions. In Canada (surely the richest mineral country in the world) geological exploration is now being done by helicopter. But in British Guiana, with its gold, diamonds and aluminium, prospecting has been confined mainly to the coastal belt and the hinterland has been neglected. Coupled with the need for new discoveries is the need for making better use of what is available by proper refining and conservation. The Congress, by pooling the knowledge of 600 mining and metallurgical experts, can perhaps help the Commonwealth to make a better contribution to the world's needs than it is at present doing.

### Labour and Science

In its *New Deal for Science* the Labour Party proposes to add to the Medical and Agricultural Research Councils a Government body which would give financial support badly needed to original research in the social sciences, not only in the universities but in the independent institutions. This is only one suggestion among many which the eminent scientists, trade unionists and managers of the Scientific Advisory Committee have now endorsed. Another is that there should be a Government Scientific Information Office, with regional branches, which will penetrate the backward sections of industry and give full assistance to progressive managements. Trade unions are urged to get into the Research Associations which are a partnership between industries and Government. At the moment they are mainly concerned with applied research for the benefit of firms, but with the co-operation of the unions they should be able to undertake Operational Research, which is concerned with the improvement of methods, processes and human relations. Only if the workers will co-operate can the application of the scientific methods which had spectacular results in war be really successful. The report also provides a charter for science, pledging that there will be no interference with pure research, although to-day the Government is subsidising universities to the tune of £17,500,000; and a proposal for a code, directed against trade secrecy, which scientists should adopt. The theme of these proposals is that Britain, once the workshop of the world, should become its laboratory and pilot plant, harnessing skills new and old to the world's needs.

## PARLIAMENT: Striking and Wounding

*Wednesday*

A YEAR ago, the Prime Minister gently chided the striking dockers. He spoke on the wireless of conditions "before" and "after"; he mentioned the pay-packet, once lean, now fat; and imagined the reproachful look in the miners' eyes at the men who frivolously were spurning what the Labour Movement had won. The sense of shame that he induced made not only the dockers, but many others besides, shuffle back to work the next day.

In the present strike, it's the Communists, both at the docks and in the House, who are trying to make the Labour Party shamefaced. "What!" they say, "Using troops to break a strike? Is that the meaning of Social-Democracy?" In this way, they attack both the principles and the functioning of the Labour Government.

With some monotony, though with a cheerful face, the Minister of Labour kept coming to the despatch-box each day at the end of questions, to say that "the position at the London Docks has not improved." Heads wagged. Faces became set in a conventional this-is-a-crisis groove. But partly owing to the belief that there were sinister forces at work which only the Home Secretary could deal with, few Members made any suggestions about what should be done. The Minister of Labour himself seemed satisfied that his sole part in the matter was to take the temperature of the strike, and report it daily to the House.

Silverman, with Eden's support, wanted to know whether anything was being done to tell the dockers themselves what the real issues were. He went on to attack the Attorney General for a "hysterical speech" about Communists. Shawcross leaned across to Isaacs to indicate that he would deal with the matter during the debate on the Emergency Powers Act. There was, indeed, some uneasiness among Members that the accusation of sabotage and treason against Communists, if valid, was not followed by criminal charges; and if invalid, has been used to divert attention from the actual position of the Communists in this strike. By suggesting that the Government should unload the "black" ships by means of troops and so end the dispute, Piratin let slip the clearest indication yet given in this Parliament that even the Communist Party is moved by a complex of expediency.

No wonder, then, that he couldn't get any support in dividing the House on the Prime Minister's Motion to revive the Emergency Powers. Solley, whose interjections are in a voice that makes the chandeliers go "Ping!" shouted "Shame!", but even before he and Piratin, to their evident satisfaction, had performed their exhibition, it was clear that the dockers could only be weakened by Communist help.

The Third Reading of the Finance Bill was a little rehearsal of the Economic Debate. A major Tory cure for the financial crisis is to reduce income tax and make some people richer. Jay and Paget had no difficulty in showing the futility, apart from the injustice, of such elementary jiggery-pokery. But the City school of economics still dominates Tory thinking. And between the Tory Front Bench and the farthest back-bench where the distributists, bilateralists, individualists and flat-earthers sit, is the Marsh of which Birch is a principal resident.

In the Finance Debate, Birch, as usual, reached a high level of mediocrity. His speciality is the anti-Ministerial gibe; and since his jests have all the air of bowdlerised stockbrokers' jokes, even though they are sometimes polished up with the driblets of a classical tag, it is fitting that they should be received with guffaws and leers by those around him. Apart from political ear-tweaking and arm-twisting, Birch takes a particular pleasure in rubbing the nation's nose into the fact of American charity. That can always be guaranteed to get a "Hear! Hear!" from the Tories.

But despite Birch's sour indelicacies, the Labour Government somehow contrives to overcome its crises, to keep on good terms with the Americans and to win elections. There is little wonder that, with the Finance Bill as with the dockers' strike, the Tory policy seems to be: "Leave it to the Government!"

MAURICE EDELMAN

# THE PRESIDENT MARKS TIME

PRESIDENT TRUMAN has at last found an official definition for the continuing decline in the American economy. With typical complacency, scorning the pessimists who believe a serious depression has begun and the optimists who, seeing only a "normal re-adjustment," believe that "nature should take its course," the President has informed Congress that there is a "moderate downward trend." There is, he argues in his half-yearly Economic Report, no cause for alarm. On the contrary, the American economy remains strong and healthy. If the nation takes his advice, the trend can be reversed and American production can be raised to new levels in the next few years. His own forecast, in fact, is a possible increase of twenty per cent. to a $300 billions gross national product.

Although this prediction may seem unrealistically exuberant, it is clearly intended to offset growing uneasiness about the "downward trend," which has already produced a cautious attitude towards new spending among both American consumers and businessmen. If the President does not yet consider it opportune to call for any drastic measures to control the deflation, for fear of further stimulating "defeatism," he has at least placed himself on record for "conscious and positive action" to prevent the U.S. economy from running downhill to lower levels of welfare, security and employment. Insisting that the Federal Government can and will follow an expansionist policy when necessary, Mr. Truman has asked private enterprise to do the same, to refrain from its traditional cures of wage reductions, restriction of output and investment; and he condemns the "folly" of cutting Federal spending merely to achieve a balanced Budget. For the moment, he has chosen the relatively easy course of achieving a deficit budget by accepting Congress's refusal to find the necessary money.

The President did not try to minimise the extent of the decline over the last six months. The fall in industrial production to 13 per cent. below the peak reached last October is quite considerable. Though total employment is still at the high level of 58 millions, 6 per cent. of the labour force is now workless and jobs must be found for more than a million school and college graduates when the summer months, which always show a seasonal increase in employment, are over. Moreover, unemployment has risen sharply in "many localities and even some States," and Mr. Truman admitted the need for prompt Federal assistance in such cases. Credit has been restricted and business investment, thanks partly to a sharp reduction of stocks, has fallen by 25 per cent. More than a third of all American families now have no liquid assets left. Yet Mr. Truman is not unduly troubled by these figures. As long as corporation assets, production, profits and prices remain more than 150 per cent. above the 1940 level, there are no real signs of a "serious economic emergency."

How, then, can the United States achieve "a sounder price structure and the restoration of maximum production and employment"? First, the President suggests, American enterprise must take full advantage of new investment opportunities. Secondly, since purchasing power is the "ultimate source of profits," U.S. business must cut prices and seek larger sales, though this objective can be reached only if wages are kept up and perhaps raised. Thirdly, though Mr. Truman has now dropped his demand for new taxes to raise $4 billions, penny-pinching in Federal expenditures would intensify the deflation. Politically and economically, the situation demands at least temporary deficit financing. Fourthly, he demands that Congress should vote an extended programme of farm price supports, an increase in the national minimum wage, larger Federal grants to State social security schemes and—a suggestion that may prove unpopular on Capitol Hill—a standard unemployment benefit of up to thirty dollars a week for an unmarried worker. The President did not, however, propose any immediate increase in public works, which are already scheduled to cost more than $3 billions a year. This, coupled with State and private projects, should give a total construction investment of about $6 billions.

If Mr. Truman and his advisers are right in their analysis, his proposals are sensible and probably adequate for the moment. But will Congress accept them, or will it refuse to interfere with deflation, at this stage, as it refused the President powers to control the previous inflation? His Report shows that Mr. Truman is personally prepared for drastic action. Unlike President Hoover, who never saw the Great Depression when it had arrived, President Truman is anxious to avoid it. But, unlike President Roosevelt, his powers of leadership are no match for his good intentions.

Congress, moreover, is infinitely less aware of the problems created by the American surplus than Mr. Truman. When he insists that any attempt to cut U.S. imports in the interests of American producers, reduce foreign economic aid, or throw out the Reciprocal Trade Agreements, would only intensify American export problems, he is talking the kind of sense that Congress finds peculiarly difficult to understand. The deflation is already felt on both sides of the Atlantic: a real depression could be disastrous. Congress may feel that Sir Stafford Cripps is actively ruining Britain's economy. This is far less reasonable than our fear that, if it fails to learn a little horse sense from Mr. Truman, Congress may ruin us all by inaction.

# THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

IT is remarkable how little attention has been paid to the note of reservation appended by Margaret Jay to the Report of the Population Commission. In this note she argued that the cost of education is the determining factor in the size of middle-class and professional families. In her own words, the parents know "that the more children they have, the worse will each be educated in comparison with those of their friends and relations. There is no escape for the middle-class parent in this dilemma except either to limit his family to one or two children or deliberately to acquiesce in giving them inferior education." Mrs. Jay then outlines two possible solutions. The first—propounded by Mr. Harrod—is to create a system of compulsory insurance within the higher income groups. As Mrs. Jay points out, this is tantamount to subsidising education by the rich for the rich, and is politically impossible even for a Tory Government. She is therefore driven to the drastic alternative of proposing the abolition of all fees in preparatory and Public Schools.

It reveals much about the composition of this Commission that she could find no other member to support her. Out of fifteen persons selected by a Socialist Government, fourteen were so strongly opposed to the abolition of educational

privilege that they were prepared to shirk the inevitable conclusion of their own enquiry, even when the abolition of fees had been shown to be essential to the survival of the middle-classes. Class consciousness is as intense as it is irrational, and the desire for educational privilege pervades our whole society. How little it has to do with party politics is revealed by the fact that *Labour Believes in Britain* contains no proposals for abolishing the present dual system of education. As the Population Commission unanimously points out, the Butler Act is actually increasing the gulf between the two systems:

> It may be anticipated that a considerable proportion of parents will seek Grammar School education for their children elsewhere because they cannot qualify for a place in the public system. The effect to be anticipated is an increased demand for fee-paying Grammar School places *and there is evidence that this is already happening. The number of private schools is increasing*, and in consequence of the increased demand as well as of the withdrawal of grants from private schools that remain outside the public system, fees are being increased. This is an unfortunate incidental consequence of the new Act. (My italics.)

Apparently the Labour Party is quite content to let this process continue; or, alternatively, the Executive deludes itself, in defiance of all evidence, that the State system will soon become so excellent that the demand for fee-paying schools will be removed.

Mrs. Jay's proposal is, of course, based on strictly demographic grounds, and takes no account of the educational and social case against privileged education. It is all the most impressive to find the traditional Socialist arguments buttressed by this new line of attack, and all the more distressing that the Labour Party seems to consider the nationalisation of cement and sugar a more important step towards social equality than an educational reform, without which it is grotesque to speak of "fair shares for all."

Mrs. Jay's argument, however, may yet drive the Labour Party into action. For, without her reservations, the Population Report is a very dangerous document. It adds strength to those who, while apparently asking for "quality breeding," are really demanding the stratification of the population into rigid income groups. If the Government bases its policy on the recommendations of the fourteen who opposed Mrs. Jay, this is just what will occur.

The fact is that the present dual system faces the conscientious parent with an insoluble dilemma. However strong his democratic principles, he is almost bound to send his son to a preparatory and Public School if he can afford it. (In this article, for reasons of space, I am dealing solely with boys' education.) "Is it fair to submit my boy to an inferior education simply because I hold certain political principles?" The question can only be answered in one way. As long as privileged education exists, we shall all try to take advantage of it when we can afford to do so—and very often when we cannot.

What is the cure? Mrs. Jay naturally enough confines herself to the ultimate solution—the abolition of all fees. But this certainly cannot be done by the simple decision to make all entrance a matter of winning a State scholarship; and, by itself, it would not be a complete solution. For the difference between the two systems is not merely one of private and public finance nor even of boarding *versus* day schools. There is also the difference of leaving age (eleven plus in the public and 13 plus in the private schools), and, above all, the difference of quality. The Public Schools are not merely "snob" schools; they fulfil the function of educating a responsible *élite*. This function is necessary in any modern State. What is needed, therefore, is not to abolish them, or turn them into super-State schools for the cleverest boys, but to break the link between *élite* education and personal wealth, and so make it compatible with Social-Democracy. One virtue of the Public School is that it mixes together boys of varying ability. To make entrance to such schools dependent on scholarship alone would be to destroy this balance and with it a lot of their value.

The right policy surely is to start at the bottom and deal with the preparatory and primary schools first. The powers granted by the Butler Act to inspect private schools are not yet in full force. Though you need a licence to butcher cattle, sell drugs or build a house, anyone with any qualifications or lack of qualifications can set up a school in England and sell "education" to gullible parents. Inspection of all private schools, in order to ensure minimum standards of efficiency, is obviously a preliminary to any serious educational reform. Once effected, a beginning could be made with a free place system in preparatory schools.

Coupled with inspection must come a decision to bring the leaving ages of the two systems into line. There can be little doubt that on this point the privileged system has an advantage. Few educationalists can defend 11 plus as the age at which a critically important decision on a child's future should be made. Within the State system multilateral schools, when they are built, *may* enable mistaken selections to be rectified; but this cannot affect interchange between the two systems. This will only be possible on a large scale if our primary education, like that in many American States, is carried on up to the age of thirteen, so that all children in both systems can begin secondary education at roughly the same time.

This change is all the more important if our aim is, as it must be, not to level down and standardise the privileged schools but to make (say) Dragons School, Oxford, and Rugby standards of excellence. It is clear enough, from the fees which parents are prepared to pay, that the best preparatory and Public Schools have virtues which the State system does not possess, quite apart from the size of classes and the hours of leisure and salaries of teaching staff. Chief among these virtues is their variety of teaching methods. This is why there is nothing to be said for the idea, once fashionable in Socialist circles, of "taking the Public Schools over" and turning them into State secondary schools, or alternatively, of letting them wither away for lack of financial support. What is needed is to preserve the Public Schools as institutions, while removing the financial barriers which both restrict entry to them and compel the middle-classes to reduce the size of their families.

These financial barriers affect the scholarship-boy almost as much as the fee-paying entrant. Nine Winchester scholars out of ten are products of expensive private schools where the boy can learn to write Greek prose and Latin verse. The boy from the village school, whatever his ability, cannot hope to win that sort of scholarship. But it would be a grave mistake for this reason to lower the scholarship standards and thereby to destroy the humanist tradition which still provides the finest intellectual training in the world. What is needed in the first instance is a large percentage of free entries into the public schools (say 40 per cent.) for *non-scholarship* boys. In an examination designed to select not the intellectual but the potential manager of men, the village schoolboy will compete on equal terms with the rich man's son from the expensive prep. school, just as he does in selection for O.C.T.U. Meanwhile, the scholarship boys are bound to come largely from the middle-classes who can afford prep. school education and provide a home background which stimulates the life of ideas. There is no political or educational reason why they should not.

It may be argued that these proposals would still further reduce the places in secondary education available to the children of the middle-classes—indeed, this is probably the reason why the fourteen refused to support Mrs. Jay. To this objection there are two answers. In the first place, social justice must demand that the best education should be available to the best, irrespective of class, provided that the measures taken to ensure social justice do not destroy the quality of the education. If the middle-class child *is* superior in breeding to the child of other classes, that superiority surely must show itself in the examination to select non-scholarship candidates. To deny this is to display the attitude of those who defended the purchase of Commissions in the Army and opposed the introduction of a Civil Service examination a hundred years ago. Moreover, as Mrs. Jay has shown, the abolition of fees in preparatory and Public Schools will primarily benefit the middle-classes. They are the people who like to send their sons (and even their daughters) to boarding school, whereas working-class families by and large regard boarding school almost as a stigma. I should hope that many working-class families will learn that Borstal is not the only type of boarding school; but meanwhile the middle classes should do as well under a system of free entry as they did during the war under the new methods of officer-selection. If they did not, it would be a signal proof that the "quality breeding," which is the main thesis of the Population Report, is, after all, a myth.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

## GERMAN RECOVERY

WESTERN GERMANY'S part in the current European depression was well enough illustrated by a cartoon which appeared in a Düsseldorf paper last month showing a restaurant stacked high with food and well supplied with waiters, but with no guests except for one—who entered timidly and asked if he might use the telephone. The more obvious signs of recession are on every hand. Unemployment grew by 63,000 in April, and by another 20,000 in the first two weeks of May, when it was still rising past a total at that moment of 1,252,000. The index of industrial production fell from 89 (based on 1936) in April to 82 in May. While demand continues high in some branches of the consumers goods industries, in others it has begun to go back. Fewer new orders are being received by industry as a whole—but especially by the capital goods industry—and many old orders are being cancelled.

It is true that things were a little better in June. Unemployment scarcely diminished, but the industrial productions index picked up again to 87. Those who control the machinery of credit in Frankfurt—in the first place, that is, the Americans—appear to have felt that "deflation" had gone far enough. Credit was allowed to become a little easier, and the stream of cancelled orders flowed less boisterously.

There is, indeed, a surprising resilience left in this economy. It is not only that the Ruhr is now producing steel at the rate of 9.2 milllion tons a year, achieving 770,788 tons in May against a target of 707,089 tons; that houses of the bigger

and more expensive sort are going up in every direction; that the *Reichsbahn* is working reasonably to time. More impressive is the official estimate that productivity has increased since the currency reform of June, 1948, by as much as 30 per cent. But who, meanwhile, is pocketing the proceeds?

There seems no doubt that the level of real wages has never been so low in Germany as it is to-day. While the cost of living (comparing the pre-war *Reichsmark* with the contemporary *Deutschemark*) appears to have more than doubled since 1938, the levels of money wages have scarcely changed. What these levels really are may seem as surprising to the British trade unionist as they were delightful to a British housewife, encountered in the Ruhr, who told me that she was paying eight pounds a month for two full-time German domestic servants. The wages chart for North Rhine-Westfalia, where wages are on the average higher than elsewhere, shows no wage in any industry above 169 pfennigs an hour, although I am told that 200 pfennigs or more can here and there be earned on piece rates. The highest regular wage being paid in the Ruhr steel industry is 145 pfennigs an hour, in the chemical industry 105 pfennigs an hour, in shoe-making 136 pfennigs an hour, and so on. Officially, the *Deutschemark* (100 pfennigs) stands at about one shilling and sixpence; actually, its comparable value is probably between tenpence and a shilling.

One of the most useful offshoots of the Social Democratic Party, the Wissenschaftliche-Wirtschafts Institut of Cologne, published in its *Mitteilungen* for April 15, 1949, some calculations of a more general nature. It found that the average monthly earnings of 12.3 million German workers (clerical employees included) worked out at no more than 220 DM. Another inquiry showed that the average income last September of 306 workers' *families* was 218.20 DM, and that these families were getting about half as much cooking and other fats as in 1937, about a fifth of the meat, a little more bread and about one and a half times as much potato. A member of the same Institute, Dr. Rolf Wagenführ, concluded lately that the average income of the German workers stood at about 60 per cent. of 1936.

From those extraordinarily low wages high taxes are taken. Unmarried persons, or married persons with one child, pay direct taxes from incomes as low as 2,000 *Deutschemark* a year. Direct taxes remain cripplingly high at all levels, but weigh with particular severity on middle-class incomes. Small wonder, then, that even the severely respectable *Bank Deutscher Länder* should be forced to the conclusion, expressed two months ago, that there are many millions of Germans who can no longer afford the basic necessities of life.

No statistics for profits or dividends exist: the Christian-Democratic-Liberal majorities in the *Landtäge* have seen to that. Dr. Wagenführ's inquiry, quoted above, found that the average level of industrial profits had reached 91 per cent. of 1936 by the end of 1948, and 115 per cent. by last March. This is probably on the modest side. Taxation, to be sure, remains theoretically high in all groups, but serious observers seem agreed that evasion is both frequent and extensive at the highest level. Income devoted to investment, furthermore, is now exempt from direct taxation. It seems in any case fair to conclude that German business, freed from all supervision and encouraged to get "free enterprise" back on its feet as soon as possible, has taken all the profits that it could; and that these have been by no means meagre.

The argument for high profits most frequently heard at the moment is that these alone can recapitalise German industry. "If profits should fall," wrote Dr. Miksch, deputy director of prices in the Economic Administration, last February, "the problem of an absolute lack of capital will again become acute. High business profits are necessary so long as other sources of capital formation remain inadequate." Capital formation, in other words, is being promoted along classical lines—with the classical concomitants of high unemployment, low consumption, and a credit policy which makes life painful for all but the handful of capitalists who can afford to live through it. This, one feels, is where we came in.

In reality, of course, recapitalisation cannot be carried out—and least of all in Germany—by the simple expedient of milking the masses. It requires the restoration of a proper equilibrium to the whole German economy. And it is here that the occupying Powers reveal their grip. In peacetime, Germany built up her economy, and paid for her imports of food and raw materials by exports of which over 80 per cent. consisted of manufactured goods. In 1947 the exports of Bizonia consisted of coal and timber as to more than 70 per cent. Out of total exports from Bizonia in 1948 of 598,993,000 dollars, coal and related fuels accounted for 281,571,000 dollars, iron and steel for 29,139,000 dollars, timber products for 28,652,000 dollars, and non-metallic minerals for 19,359,000 dollars: over half of Bizonia's exports were of fuel and raw material. So long as this continues, clearly there can be no proper capitalisation of industry—sweated labour or not—simply because wide sectors of industry are being deprived of their markets abroad, or are effectively prevented from working at all.

A synthesis of these various trends will allow two main conclusions. In the first place, it is now abundantly clear that political partition in Germany has meant—along with the fight against structural change—the gradual restoration in the Western Zones of those industrial interests, mainly monopolist, which dominated the economic life of Germany in the decades before 1945. The "recovery" which is now to be observed out here is that of a capitalist system which has lost little or none of its old restrictive and unbalanced nature. Its monopolist pattern may be disguised for the moment by programmes for "decentralisation and deconcentration"; closer inspection shows that these programmes, such as they are, can have little or no permanent effect. History being what it is, one can only marvel at the stubborn persistence of the masters of German industry, and at the astonishing complacency of German trade union leaders. The latter seem quite prepared to act once more upon the memorable slogan coined in 1930 by Fritz Tarnow—today the aged leader of the unions in the U.S. Zone—that Social-Democracy must come forward as "the doctor at the sick-bed of capitalism."

The second conclusion is that this supremacy of the German industrialists is only relative. There is one power in Western Germany, evidently, which is yet greater than theirs, and that is the power of American business. "So far, we have been the President of this company," one of the principal U.S. economic advisers here remarked lately, when commenting on the degree of autonomy which the Germans might expect to gain in the near future: "and now we are going to be the Chairman." That seems to be about the size of it.

BASIL DAVIDSON

*Frankfurt, July.*

# A COUNTRY DIARY

I HAVE gone back to live in the country after four years in London. Life became medieval, ugly and intolerably isolated in the country during the war; but now it has resumed its civilisation. The life of the great cities makes people anonymous. One has no neighbours. It is terrifying when the people next door speak to you. How astonished people were when everyone spoke to everyone else in 1940; how glad they were when that emotional period was over. Acquaintance, without some sort of community behind it, seems to be unsatisfying, dangerous, and often to be regretted. But country life, which is community life, is the school for the study of human nature: all the main human types are there undisguised, all their secrets are displayed and, being displayed, are forgiven. In every village, one finds the ambitious family, with its daughters strategically placed in all the Government offices and with one, at least, in the telephone exchange. In every village there is the thieving family whom everyone accuses and no one prosecutes—the community defends them against outsiders: they are *our* thieves. And then there are the amorous family with its variegated children, the happy-go-luckys, the demons for work, the snobs, the jail bird, the lunatic, the hero, the honest man, the sick man propped for years at his window, warning us that illness, too, is a way of living a kind of culture of its own.

* * *

One can be certain to find those classical English characters, the drunken couple. They get drunk, it seems, on behalf of the whole community and, during the war, took on the martyrdom of the great explorers, like Doughty, travelling unheard-of distances across the desert in great discomfort, from one secret oasis of gin or whiskey to the next. I rememer our Don Juan who practised his arts in the signal box, our good Job upon whom disasters rained, our animal lover who was the chief killer of creatures, cooing with affectionate phrases before he wrung the chicken's neck; our village gossip with a tongue like gorse, our big-drum bellied tyrant. We were all completely known to one another; there was bottomless malice but there was enormous tolerance. Only once was the balance of good and evil, the set of character, upset. This was when the American troops came: horrors then occurred. The filth of the village came to the top; but, such is the power of the community, it has sunk back.

* * *

"Between the wars the English novel was ruined by the small cottage in the country," said an acclaimed and eminent novelist. Another, appealing for houses for writers, had already referred to the novel as "a declining cottage industry." We all agreed that large houses, more travel, expensive periods in London, Paris, Rome, New York and a great deal more dash and debt would improve us. To live modestly beyond exiguous means leads to intellectual stagnation; the ivory cottage is worse than the ivory tower.

It is all nonsense, of course: there is no choice nowadays. But, on the whole, while French writers pack together in Paris, English writers tend to disperse to the country and avoid one another. I fancy the migration dates from the industrial revolution. Frantic, head-splitting sociability, smoke poisoning, restlessness and—since the war—expense, have made the large cities uninhabitable for those who have to give long reflection to their work. The cities are suitable to the hardened, the strong character, the lonely, the vagrant. Since the war, large areas of the once

quiet middle-class boroughs in London are now rotting and becoming slums; George Orwell's picture of the decaying London in 1984 is a pretty accurate description of London to-day. The advantages of country life to the writer are the longer day, a less inbred, less professional social life, calmer nerves. The ulcers settle to a gentle gnaw, the head is clear in the morning, the mind is not full of the racket of the night before; one has escaped the relaxing London climate, with what Henry James called its "carboniferous damp," the close air of the fuming cinder heap.

* * *

The nearest analogy to life in the country for an English writer in England is life in Paris. One is surrounded by scandalous acquaintances and a foreign civilisation, speaking a foreign language; the food is good, the manner of living easy; the tourists are apt to drink too much. With the decline of wealth in the larger houses, a pleasant, slightly raffish, slightly melancholy whiff of Turgenev and the Russian novel begins to enliven English country life. Between the wars it had little material for the novelist, who was well advised to go back frequently to London for regular doses of urban poisoning; one wrote off one's accumulation of material in the country, and, when that was finished, one discovered that one had been taking in nothing new: now a small decadent material has come to the point of ripeness.

* * *

The funds given by the Rockefeller Foundation to help young English writers of promise, whose careers were interrupted by service in the war, are low, but they have not quite run out. No more money appears to be coming from America, and it is the turn of English patrons to put their hands into their pockets. Money is poured into science, but very little is given to literature except by public-spirited authors themselves. (The generosity of the Maugham Scholarships is a remarkable example.) Forty-seven of the Rockefeller Atlantic Awards of between £150 and £300 have been given during the last three years—there were over 600 applications—and, looking down the list, I see that a large number of the winners have now been able to publish books, and three or four of these writers turn out to have uncommon talent. The experiment has been a real success. I shall be interested to read the full critical report on their activities which the Committee has now undertaken.

* * *

Sometimes a gift of two or three hundred pounds will save a writer; to others it may come before they are really ready for it. Occasionally, like luck in a lottery, the result is catastrophic. One awardee, older than the average, a sincere and able working-class writer who had been hoping for such a chance all his life, broke down when he got it, spent six months in hospital and ended in far worse circumstances than when he started. Now that interruption by war is not a difficulty in the life of the young writers, it seems to me that the conditions of literary awards in general should be reconsidered. On the grounds that anyone who has anything to say can always get one book published, I would give awards on published work only; the first manuscripts of very good writers have very often been totally unpromising. I would also greatly increase the money. A gift of two or three hundred pounds is not enough to enable a writer to give up a job which is taking him from his book. The literary life is far more difficult for the author of three or four books, even successful ones, than it is for the beginner. Again, in middle age, there is another period of crisis. It is the time when, under our commercial dispensation, authors "sell out," and, in the present plight of the professional classes, the survivors will be few. At that time of life, few are likely to say with one enthusiastic Awardee, that "Five pounds a week is the ideal sum to live on."

* * *

The chief disadvantage of the country is the noise. The tractor nags all day in the fields: there are no sounds as raucous as those of mechanised agriculture. (Ulcers have now spread from the city to tractor drivers.) But nature has always been boisterous. A cuckoo can ruin a day's work, and, with the cow separated from its calf, must be matched against the wireless next door, the piano upstairs. But, in the summer, the real enemies of literature in the country are the bees and the flies. They have converted my room into an aerodrome. One can bring the first wave down with DDT, but this airforce has endless reserves. Distantly, high up in the chimney one hears a bee, painfully lumbering lower and lower, until with a roar, out he swings into the room, round and round, like a boy's tethered model aircraft, unable to find the open window. There is a dramatic silence when he gets out at last, but it is soon broken by the high snarl of the little Spitfires taking off from the table, or the low diving attacks upon one's ankles. I remember a Spanish professor who traced the anarchic state of Spanish politics to the fact that Spaniards are driven out of their minds every day by flies.

* * *

The man who worked in my garden had a village character, like the rest. He was noted for twenty miles around as The Fool. At the age of 66 he married our Termagant who turned him out of the house after one of those family battles which every village enjoys. I had to help him in some legal difficulty, which he put to me one day when I was at the top of a tree picking apples and he was at the bottom holding the ladder.

"I've got to get a separation," he called up.

"When did you leave your wife?" I called down. He considered this for a long time.

"I can't hardly remember," he said. "I think it must have been when the evenings were drawing out longer."

V. S. PRITCHETT

## THIS ENGLAND

**Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed. Paste entries on a POSTCARD.**

Relatives of an executed criminal will get only two-fifths of any death grant due under the National Insurance Act, it was announced last night.—*Daily Express*. (William Laslett.)

Old Etonian Association.—The annual general meeting will be held at the Polytechnic, Regent Street.—Advt. in *The Times*. (Arthur Jacobs.)

Answering the call of "To the barricades," over 500 residents gathered in and outside the church hall at Weston Green, Thames Ditton, last night, to protest against what was described as a "monstrous proposal to turn Ditton Common into a refuse dumping ground."—*The Times*. (H. S. Thomas.)

It is true that Conservatives have not always been consciously and exclusively concerned with the well-being of the poor.—From *Essays in Conservatism*, Conservative Political Centre. (R. T.)

The Chancellor seemed to rule out in advance any hopeful and constructive action—except more import cuts. No reduction in wages, no reduction in the standard of living, no unemployment, no economies . . . nothing.—City column in *News Chronicle*. (Z. C.)

## LOST WEEK-END

After the clash of the session Parisian,
After the heat of the Marshall mêlée,
Snyder and Cripps in surroundings Elysian,
Spending at Chequers a night and a day,
Hold, out of earshot of polygot oratory,
Anglo-American confabs exploratory,
Screened behind shrubs of peculiar density,
Grappling with problems of daunting immensity,
Framing a Treasury communiqué.

Markets are reeling and currencies floundering,
Payments accruing which no one can pay,
Rumour repeats Britain's sterling is foundering,
Drains on the dollar new measures must stay,
Stabilisation agreement would shatter all
Empire preference, treaties bilateral,
Nothing but debts have remained interchangeable,
Hard cash and soft are not freely exchangeable.
What says the Treasury communiqué?

"Talks have been held upon long-term recovery,
Causes of breakdown the experts must weigh,
Plans must be based upon factual discovery,
Action postponed while all fields they survey;
Short-term approaches are studied collectively,
Long-term arrangements considered objectively,
Far-reaching measures for every contingency
Forecast a season of probable stringency."
So says the Treasury communiqué.

Filled with desire for the widest publicity,
Joined with resolve to give nothing away,
National arbiters shun specificity,
Chequered week-ends pre-dispose to delay.
Deep in the heart of the Home Counties' scenery,
Muzzled by foliage, muffled by greenery,
Voice of the oracle, patently Cripptical,
Quite enigmatical, non-Apolytical
Speaks in the Treasury communiqué.

SAGITTARIUS

## CROSS-PURPOSES—II

In family quarrels, the violence of the commotion often seems disproportionate to what has stirred it up. An outsider may suspect the presence of hidden tensions, but these are not easy for him to understand. He is suddenly in the midst of a bewildering cross-fire of grievances, kept up with little regard for truth or accuracy, and threatening to spread far beyond its point of outbreak. In the case of the railwaymen a sharp, but essentially limited and local, dispute—that about Lodging Turns—was soon smothered by the greater noise of pay-claims. That is not all. There is a distant, more ominous booming of discontent.

It has been possible to detect this other noise right from the beginning. I don't mean to suggest that the original dispute had nothing in it. There were, and are, some genuine objections to "lodging." The driver who told me that, in thirty-five years of driving, he had spent a third of his nights away from home, has at least a sympathetic case. The practice was always unpopular, especially in the North-east, where it was dropped during the war; and conditions are rotten in a good many places. Fear of dismissals and of "down-grading" was also understandable, even if exaggerated. To economise, both in time and manpower, was one of the explicit purposes, and it isn't easy to reassure men (who remember similar assurances) merely by telling them that you don't intend to sack anyone, but will wait for them to retire or die off. Somehow or other it had got about—how, belongs to the history of public incompetence—that the Railway Executive estimate that they have 26,000 too many men. No railwayman wants either to be himself one of those 26,000, or, by working overtime and "lodging," to make somebody else into one. "Railways are a family!"

Instead of basing themselves on these valid

objections, the railwaymen preferred to deny outright the value of "lodging," from the point of view of an improved railways service. They argued that you could get more work out of men without "lodging," that schedules could be improved even with stops here and there to take on reliefs, and that the new non-stop expresses were only "for show." Anyhow, what were a few minutes one way or another? This was weak ground: a few minutes are something, if one has to travel a lot; and anything is something which, by freshening up the engrimed railways, enables them to win back lost custom and approach solvency.

I don't want to make too much of the lodging quarrel, which has been pushed out of sight, and of which both parties are perhaps now a little ashamed. In fact, with a minimum of publicity (characteristic of railway affairs) they have produced a workable rule. "All proposed additional lodging turns arising from the summer time-table (starting 23rd May), and all future additional lodging turns, shall be the subject matter of examination and discussion between Railway Executive and Unions at headquarters level." It would be a mistake of impatience to wonder why they hadn't been able to fix this before. For it is precisely in the apparent irrelevance and comparative insignificance of the trouble that its real interest lies. If one talked long enough with railwaymen, including those directly affected, they would eventually concede the force of the arguments in favour of "lodging." "It would improve things a bit" said one, after having said the opposite with a mass of statistics. Even when fears about the "redundant" 26,000 were acknowledged, the railwaymen did not like to dwell on these. It irked them to appear as stubborn obstacles to efficiency.

At this point the argument would shift from the merits of the case to the methods used in the handling of it, and it was here that anger glared out. "Autocrats!" "Using the big whip!" "Thought they knew what was good for people and could just tell them what to do." "They threw down the gauntlet and naturally we picked it up!" These are just samples of a protest voiced with innumerable variations. Always the same protest. Orders have been handed to them, new arrangements made, and their views have not been asked. They are practical men, many with a lifetime of service to railways, and they would have liked a chance to help and suggest. They feel hurt. It is neither more nor less than that. And this, they say, is nationalisation!

Angry men are not notable for logic. How much of their anger really turns on wages? They are a serious matter. Railwaymens' wages vary from the £4 12s. 6d. of the Grade II porter to the £7 18s. 6d. of the Special Class Signalman. Within the limits of this "differential" of 66s., room has to be found for ninety-six different grades of status and pay. There are some piecework incentives (especially among goods-grades) and overtime payments in railway work, but on the whole the railwayman is much more closely tied to his basic wage than workers elsewhere, outside agriculture, and more rigidly and narrowly pegged in his prospects of promotion. Differences of shillings distinguish grades of responsibility and ability, which in the business world would be signalised in salaries varying by hundreds of pounds. The objection against further narrowing these cramped "differentials" is neither trivial nor greedy, and the offer to raise exclusively the wages of the lowest-paid must be seen in this context.

As soon as the wages question is contested in open battle, as now, it inevitably attracts a lot of strong feeling. There is no lack of ammunition: inadequacy of present rates, continuing rise in cost of living, recent increases to other workers, compensation to ex-stockholders. Nevertheless, I am convinced, after many hours spent with railwaymen, that wages are not the heart of the matter, for all their importance. The men do talk about them, and feel about them, but with far less warmth and persistence than they give to a discontent which has nothing to do with wages. They will tell you, if you ask, that a full settlement of wages-claims would not eradicate this discontent. One need not take only their word for it. The 90,000 drivers and firemen of the A.S.L.E. & F., who are not asking for wage-increases and have publicly deplored the aggressive tactics of the N.U.R., are at heart as unsettled as the rest.

"Frustration is rampant!" cried one driver at King's Cross. His eyes confirmed his words. "The men are seething with bitterness."

This is a serious business. It does not mean that the problem of wages does not have to be dealt with. It does mean that something else has to be dealt with also, something which has been overlooked. The men who talk this way are not revolutionaries: Communist influence among them is slight although active. Although there is a good deal of excitement about "participation" and "workers' control," this is essentially a riposte from discontent; and because of their long tradition of sober-suited respectability, their present disturbance becomes the more serious.

I tried, in my article last week, to isolate the point that railwaymen put a special value on the sense of human contact, owing to their dispersal over the vast rail-network. It is this sense of contact which has got mislaid somewhere. Where they had personal, even if irascible, dealings with local managers of the old companies, the railwaymen now feel themselves trapped in the webs of a maddeningly impersonal, remote control, which cares nothing for their views. It is important to a signalman, who has carried out 2,000 vital movements in eight hours in his isolated box, and to a driver, who for eight hours has controlled a tractive energy of 30,000 lbs., that somebody should take a companionable interest in his pent-up views. I heard many nostalgic references to the esteem in which, it was said, signalmen used to be held, and the once-prevalent habit of consulting and relying on them. Expressions of this feeling are often confused or absurd, but the feeling is not absurd. Its commonest expression takes the form of anger against the new types of visiting regional officials, said to arrive by car at a station or depot, to walk about together without exchanging a word with the men on the job, and then to go away. It was contemptuously complained of one such man that he had afterwards been seen "photographing beehives." Active animus and "petty pin-pricking" are also alleged.

There are bound to be new officials, and officials have a knack of irritating. It would not matter if the men were secure in that "sense of belonging," which the Executive has said it wants them to have, and which should, unquestionably, be one of the main supports of nationalisation. In saying what they do say, the men have simply personalised this problem. It has two sides for them —misery at feeling lost in a void, bitterness at feeling that they don't matter. There is elaborate "consultative machinery" in the railways (taken over in bulk from the old days), but it has been geared to deal with petty claims and grievances—questions of seniority, grading, odd days' pay, accommodation, borderlines in promotion, and so on—not with railway-operations. No fresh imagination has been applied to it. "You're soon told to mind your own business if you start giving advice." True or not true, this is what the men generally feel.

The Railway Executive can claim that they have tried to be good employers, and have dealt fairly with the Unions. In my opinion, the detailed history of the lodging turns dispute bears them out in this, despite the thunders of the N.U.R. But the nerve-roots do not lie quite there. It is very interesting and useful for the men at the top, on both sides, to meet and have "cordial relations." Nor is this at all resented by railwaymen, who, in my experience, exempt the highest officers from their criticism. But what about the goods depots, locomotive depots, and the stations large and small all over the country, where porters, cleaners, boiler-washers, fire-droppers, fire-lighters, coalmen and the like, come up against middle-grade inspectors and supervisors, and are descended upon from outside by the smaller official fry? It is here that "cordial relations" most matter, and here that they are stagnant.

Success will never be achieved with technical plans, if the human plans remain pious phrases on paper. To change this may require a lot of apparent waste of time, getting men to talk. Preoccupied experts may find it difficult to believe that the feelings of porters must have equal priority with, say, their scheme for replacing bull-head rails with flat-bottomed tracks. Yet the question is an entirely practical one. The experts would not think of installing their new rails, however satisfactory on paper, without first carrying out exhaustive "Pilot Tests." Yet they appear to believe that simple human beings, stuck in the ruts of old ways, can adapt smoothly to fundamental change without any equivalent try-outs. In the case of the railways this is simply not so. The strength of the system is the strength of its weakest human links, and if heavy new strains are put on these, without preliminary and local explanation and encouragement, there will be general breakdown. GILES ROMILLY

## WHERE THE FRENCH SCORE

INTELLECTUALLY, France is the least totalitarian of all the countries of the world; her cultural and intellectual life is less coloured and less influenced by the State than anywhere else. This intellectual freedom and vigour of France is—if one looks a little below the surface—very striking, not only to anyone comparing this country with Eastern Europe, but also to any visitor from England or America. There are "intellectuals"—in the French and not the Russian sense—in all camps from the de Gaullists all the way across to the Communists; and your French intellectuals are something more than the English intellectuals, who usually can be sharply divided into two categories—the "politicians" (in the wider sense of the word) and the "scholars." In France, where the word intellectual has not, for this reason, any suggestion of either opportunism or ivory-tower isolationism, the intellectual is usually a combination of scholar and politician, who, without exercising a *direct* influence, has a profound indirect influence on politics. The fact that a Left-wing Catholic monthly like *Esprit* does not approve of the Atlantic Pact can have no effect on its ratification in the near future, but it is typical of the French desire to probe deeply into things, and to analyse and judge all important present-day events and phenomena more than merely on their own short-term merits. In the long run, the cumulative effect of French intellectual thinking is very powerful, and just as, before 1940, Maurras, Gide, and Céline exercised,

as intellectuals, a profound (and destructive) influence on French ways of thinking—and ultimately, acting—so the intellectuals of to-day have a large responsibility in shaping France's future destinies.

That theirs is an uphill fight, against very heavy odds, is clear enough; the mass of people in every country will fall for simple rather than difficult and involved thinking. Hence, notably, the outcry among French intellectuals of practically every political colouring against the spread to France of what is called "the civilisation of the Digest." The success of the *Reader's Digest* has taken on such alarming proportions that the word "Digest" has become almost the key to success in the publishing world, and the bookstalls are flooded with dozens of different "Digests," including "Love Digest" and "Sexual Digest." It is not without a touch of sympathy that *Esprit* describes the difficulties with which the Communist intellectuals are faced, not only in having to admit the impossibility of applying to France certain Russian cultural and scientific doctrines, but also in overcoming that *embourgeoisement* among the French working-class which results from a diet of Hollywood films, Americanised newsreels, Readers' Digests, and the more frivolous and trivial of the popular papers.

The battle against mental over-simplification is, in fact, fought by all the French intellectuals, Communists included. M. Casanova, the "cultural chief" of the French C.P., himself openly admits that it is neither possible nor desirable to apply the artistic rules of Soviet Socialism to France, whose régime is still far from being Socialist. But this last phase is only added for convenience, to avoid too much discussion over Zhdanov and Lysenko.

A lot of hard thinking goes on every day and night *sous les toits de Paris*, and much of this thinking is reflected in the daily and weekly press—not to mention the many admirable Paris monthlies—a press, one is forced to admit, incomparably less standardised and mechanical than the bulk of the British press to-day. Take even the simplest example—the recent session of the Council of Foreign Ministers. The French press looked at the whole dreary business from so many different angles—Russian motives, American motives, the future of Germany, etc.—that it succeeded in making it a palatable and readable subject, whereas the British press, almost without exception, lazily dished out the same old Foreign Office handouts night after night. *Le Monde* to-day is, in many respects, a better paper than any English paper; it has half a dozen correspondents in Germany, or writers on Germany, who provide a mass of information and ideas, which is often contradictory, but valuable—largely for that very reason. And many other French papers, both Left and Right, go out of their way to provide not merely news but what might justly be called "food for thought," demanding a high level of intellectual activity among the writers, and a desire for mental controversy and exercise among the readers.

To return to the point I mentioned before—*Esprit*'s criticism of the Atlantic Pact. This criticism, I repeat, will not make any immediate practical difference, but it is a case of the intellectual exercising a long-term influence on public opinion. It is also a completely non-opportunist reflection of the inner thoughts of many of the politicians who are openly pro-Pact.

> The Pact signifies our complete integration in the American sphere of influence. . . . This means a total renunciation of the policy that France attempted at the time of the liberation—to be the arbiter, a meeting-ground for conciliation, an intermediary zone placed between the two blocs. The Pact means the end of what might have been a great French post-war policy. . . .

The Pact, says *Esprit*, "provides for the development of our individual and collective capacity of resistance." But in a country like France, with a very limited industrial potential, this can only result in rearmament being pursued at the expense of the consumer, with the paradoxical result, most unwelcome to the Americans, that there will be an increased impoverishment of France, and, consequently, an increase in Communist influence. The Pact also clearly implies a "tough" attitude to labour troubles.

> This does not involve the Communists alone, but affects the destiny of the whole labour movement of Europe, and that social justice for which the workers have been waiting for a hundred years. Will this not be the dream of Mr. Leahy come true—the dream of an American-protected Vichy? . . . We should explain to America that international tension cannot be eliminated by military alliances and the armaments race, but that a solution must be sought in an effort to allow the two blocs to co-exist, while allowing certain historic processes to mature, and, at the same time, organising all possible economic links between the two. We would also contribute to peace by showing Russia that we refuse to take part in any criminal and ruinous crusade. . . .

*Esprit* then calls for the organisation of greater coherence amongst all the peace movements, and warns against a repetition of the mistake, made at the beginning of the French Resistance, of excluding the Communists from it.

This is an example, in many, of the thoughtful, intellectual, long-term approach to vital present-day problems. Discussions on this and other subjects are to be found in all camps in France. Jean-Paul Sartre, in the current number of *Politique Etrangère*, has a striking article on the role of French culture in the world to-day; one of his main arguments is that the military and economic might of a country has a direct bearing on its cultural influence, and that France could to-day exercise her cultural influence better than in the 18th century if she did so in alliance "with countries obsessed by the same problems and the same dangers—Italy, the Low Countries, Scandinavia, Germany, Greece, and Austria." Significantly, he does not include England, which is to him, presumably, already largely attached to America, where the role of the intellectual is radically different from that of the European intellectual.

> In France the writer and even the artist have a social and political influence, and they will always have it. The American intellectual is, on the other hand, more the uncreative university type, while the writer is a rough type without background. . . . In France the writer is *also* an intellectual. . . . In America, only the technicians say things of precise social and political value. America is never overwhelmed by a play or a novel; what overwhelms America is some work on economics or some highly documented work like the Kinsey Report. . . .

All this is good controversial stuff. And this intellectualism is widespread among politicians, too. What could be more "intellectual" than M. Léon Blum's discussion of the future of French Socialism—a piece which, coming even from a most conservative Labour leader, would be considered a political *gaffe* of the first water? But Blum's approach is a long-term approach. With the accumulated wisdom of 75 years this one-time builder (and destroyer) of the Popular Front now declares in effect that the real conflict in the world to-day is not between Socialism and capitalism, but between Socialism and Communism—between "democratic Socialism and dictatorial pseudo-Socialism." And (shades of Marx!) says he: "The conflict between America and Russia is merely accidental!"

Why, then, is capitalism not the enemy? Because, says, M. Blum, "the economy and ideology of capitalism, even in the United States, are losing more and more of their substance every day." And, without going any deeper into the matter, he sees the decline of capitalism in the re-election of President Truman! He then rejoices at the thought that the Christian Trade Unions in France, the M.R.P. and other Third Force elements all see eye to eye with him. Lenin, wherever he be, must be having a good laugh, at the sight of the Reformist Socialist having now reached the end of the road. Yet, when one discounts some patent absurdities, such as Blum's claim that the Nazis were much "crueller" to the Socialists than to the Communists (*cf.* Blum and Péri, Severing and Thaelmann), his article is essentially one calculated to provoke endless discussions *for* and *against*. The articles I have here mentioned and quoted are merely examples of that great intellectual freedom and that widespread curiosity to examine the present state of the world on high level—to see the wood for the trees, as it were—all of them qualities thanks to which France, for all its "decline," still remains, as a battlefield of ideas, so supremely important to Europe to-day.

ALEXANDER WERTH

## SO THEY SAY . . .

THE desirability of good relations between the doctors and the nation is so obvious that it makes the press treatment of the recent B.M.A. conference at Harrogate almost beyond understanding. For once, it was a question more of plain sensationalism than political bias, for the B.M.A. received worse treatment at the hands of its friends than its enemies. In fact, the whole tenor of the conference was so grossly distorted by some Right-wing papers that the B.M.A. had to send strong protests to the editors of two of them.

On Friday, June 24, the conference opened with a complaint by Dr. Guy Dain, B.M.A. chairman, over delays in setting up final arrangements for all kinds of practice. He said that, if doctors could not obtain complete freedom to take their case to arbitration, they would be "compelled to come out of the service." After some discussion a motion was passed "that this body demands that effective action be taken forthwith to insist that arbitration machinery . . . be set up. . . ."

Two motions were then proposed calling for mass resignations from the Health Service. These, according to members of the B.M.A. Council, quoted by the *Daily Herald* (June 27), were "thrown off the agenda out of hand." A third motion was passed, with one dissentient, after the ending had been amended from ". . . to organise a mass withdrawal" to "organise machinery to enable a mass withdrawal . . . to be effected at any time" (*Daily Telegraph*, June 25). No one, it appears, was more astonished than the delegates when they opened their morning papers on Saturday, June 25:

*Manchester Guardian:*

> DOCTORS PREPARE FOR "STRIKE" ACTION—ULTIMATUM TO MR. BEVAN—ARBITRATION RIGHTS OR MASS RESIGNATIONS
>
> ". . . amidst feelings of intense bitterness and resentment . . . prolonged cheering . . . the sort of terms usually associated with trade union gatherings. . . .

*Daily Mail* (p. 1 main headline):

DOCTORS IN NEW REVOLT—PREPARING WITHDRAWAL PLAN—400 AGREE TO "ACTION NOW"

Cross-headings were: "Declare War" and "Freedom . . . Or."

*Daily Express:*

DOCTORS PREPARING TO QUIT THE HEALTH SERVICE

. . . their aim is to have ready an effective "strike" weapon. . . .

*Daily Graphic:*

DOCTORS PREPARE FOR BIG WALK-OUT—PREPARATIONS FOR MASS REVOLT

*Daily Telegraph:*

DOCTORS URGE A MASS RESIGNATION—B.M.A. TO HAVE PLAN READY

Mass resignation . . . was urged by many speakers. . . . Eventually motions calling for mass resignations were withdrawn. . . ."

*The Times* headlined its story: "DOCTORS URGE ARBITRATION," and reported the arbitration proposal—but ignored the motion calling for withdrawal machinery. The *Daily Herald* headed its story: "B.M.A. CHIEF CURES A DOCTOR-CRITIC."

What was the sequel? The Conservative papers dropped the conference altogether. Only the *Manchester Guardian*, *The Times*, and the *News Chronicle* reported the delegates' rejection, the following day, of the proposal in the B.M.A.'s annual report to refuse service in cases of dental haemorrhage unless the Ministry of Health modified its decision on payment. And only one paper reported the conference's reaction to the press coverage of its opening day:

*Daily Herald*, June 27:

B.M.A. STRIKE-THREAT REPORTS ANGER DOCTORS

Doctors are angry at what they describe as "serious distortion" of [their meeting]. . . . "Doctors will never strike," a member of the B.M.A. Council said to-day. "Our duty is to our patients. However much some of us may oppose certain aspects of the National Health scheme, we could never withdraw our services from the public. It is dangerous nonsense to suggest it." Strongly worded protests . . . sent to the editors of two national newspapers . . . had been agreed at an emergency conference between Dr. Guy Dain, Council chairman, Dr. Charles Hill, B.M.A. secretary, and other Council members. . . .

There was, as a matter of fact, only one other reference to the affair in the Right-wing press—in the *Daily Express* editorial on the same day as the *Herald* story above. It urged Mr. Bevan to give in to the doctors over arbitration, because:

. . . there is no point in adding unnecessary friction to the working of the Health Scheme. . . .

AUTOLYCUS

## THE DEATH OF AN OLD MAN

Muttering at the crowd, indifferent
faces which could not understand that he,
an island full of wilting flowers pent
in by the foolish, the forgetting sea,
was rare and beautiful, quite suddenly
he plunged into the traffic, his neck bent
low like a fighting bull's who seems intent
on the quick blade but, bleeding, cannot see.

Then he awoke, his body broken, knew
what had happened. In the dusk his mind
began its last descent, let pain review
the landscapes he could neither leave behind
nor take away; for who will now unwind
his memory, relive past love, renew
the music and the silences that grew
within him for a lifetime, intertwined?

MICHAEL HAMBURGER

# THE TRIAL OF ALGER HISS

THE trial of Alger Hiss was different in many ways from anything that could happen in Britain. The judge did not wear a wig; the lawyers were allowed greater freedom than British procedure permits. In the dim, tiny, dark-panelled courtroom on the thirteenth floor of a skyscraper you could hear the distant hum of New York street traffic coming up faintly in the tense intervals. But the difference was deeper than this. The trial was conducted in a society that has suddenly and rather disagreeably found itself one of the world's two super-powers, that is anxiously and acutely conscious of Reds, spies and plots, and that has seen the isolationism of twenty-five years ago translated in many breasts into a fear of the dark unknown of Communism.

The deadlock of the Hiss jury in some degree symbolised a deeper national conflict. The jury was composed of two women and ten men, the latter drawn from business and white-collar classes. They heard the evidence, couldn't agree and were discharged. But before testing the trial for its soundness as allegory it should be said that it was first-rate drama. The American press, which has extraordinary freedom in commenting on a *sub judice* matter, dealt with the case in that light. Who was the liar, tall, spare, boyish-looking Hiss, who till recently was $20,000-a-year president of the Carnegie Peace Endowment, or Chambers, that rotund and melancholy man, until recently a $30,000-a-year senior editor of *Time*?

There were at least two incidents of high drama in the case. One was the confrontation scene. Last August, as election fever mounted, Chambers voluntarily went before the House Un-American Activities Committee to charge that certain prominent Washington officials had been, like him, members of a Communist group in the Thirties. He charged that Hiss, then in the State Department, was one. Hiss denied ever knowing Chambers. The House Committee brought the two men together in New York. The transcript of that scene was reprinted as a magazine article and is as fascinating as anything in print. Hiss, after some thought and questions about Chambers' new artificial teeth, calmly placed him as a long-forgotten "Crosley," a cadging free-lance writer with whom he had had some dealings a decade before. Chambers, on the other hand, insisted that the families were intimate, that they had met each other weekly for five years up to 1938, and that they were all secretly Communists together. Did Chambers have substantiating evidence? He disclaimed it. Had he transmitted information to Soviet sources? He denied it. The two men's wives supported their respective husbands. One side was lying—which?

The second big scene came last November 17. By this time Hiss had brought a $75,000 slander suit against Chambers. Friends had rallied round him. The election was over. The Carnegie Foundation was keeping him on its salary roll, temporarily at least. The Hiss lawyers put Chambers' wife, Esther, a simply dressed woman with steel-rimmed glasses and no make-up, through a fierce pre-trial examination. Chambers apparently made a decision. He suddenly produced dozens of typed memoranda summarising confidential State Department documents of the Thirties and charged they had come from Hiss after being typed out by Mrs. Hiss. More, he led agents to his Maryland farm where he had temporarily hidden a set of microfilms of other secret documents in a hollowed-out pumpkin. There could be no doubt of the authenticity of the material in these reports. Several documents were in Hiss's own handwriting, as he acknowledged. An expert later testified that the typed reports came from an old Woodstock typewriter that at one time was in the possession of the Hiss family.

Up to this time the affair had seemed to many like an ugly hoax, particularly to those who found the doings of the hysterical Un-American Affairs Committee distasteful and disgusting. But this new evidence caused doubts. Hiss was unmoved and unshaken. He left the Carnegie Foundation under the pressure of John Foster Dulles (as it was later revealed) one of the directors. At the same time Chambers left his post on *Time*. He was destroying himself and his adversary.

Chambers now amplified his earlier story. He had held back facts before, he said, to "spare" Hiss to whom he still professed no hostility. "I am a man . . very reluctantly and grudgingly, step by step, ruining myself so that this nation and the faith by which it lives may continue to exist," he said. He declared he had been a courier for transmitting confidential documents to Colonel Boris Bykov, of the Soviet Embassy, for transmission to Moscow.

The three-year statute of limitations on espionage charges made it impossible to initiate prosecutions on that count. The Government brought its suit against Hiss, accordingly, on a perjury indictment. He had lied under oath, it was charged, in denying he had known Chambers in 1938 and in denying that he had passed on confidential documents. The trial of these charges ended its first phase with a deadlocked jury. A poll showed four jurors thought Hiss innocent, eight guilty.

There can no longer be reasonable doubt that an espionage group like that in Canada operated in Washington at least up to 1938, and that it had access to some State Department secrets. These allegations by Chambers were supported by a second witness, Henry Julian Wadleigh, a former economist in the State Department. But Wadleigh disclaimed any knowledge of links between Chambers and Hiss. The personal enigma remains. Was this bright star of the department, assistant to Francis B. Sayre, Assistant Secretary of State, a member of the group? Hiss was at Yalta, Dumbarton Oaks, San Francisco; he brought the completed Uno charter personally to Roosevelt, he knew Eden, Smuts, Marshall, Soong; in the trial his character witnesses included Felix Frankfurter and Stanley Reed of the Supreme Court; he was former secretary to the great Justice Holmes. He did not make major policy decisions himself but he was aware when they were made. Had he played a double game?

With the gusto of a Roman senator attacking Cataline, Paul Stryker, Hiss's lawyer, flung himself into the task of destroying the credibility of Chambers. By any standard Chambers is an extraordinary figure. His record shows what may be an inner hunger for spiritual security. He first embraced then broke with Communism, declaring that he tearfully enjoined the Hisses to do the same in 1938 (an incident that the latter coldly deny). Subsequently he became an Episcopalian, then a member of the Society of Friends. At 17 he lived in the Latin Quarter of New Orleans with an unmarried woman, wrote erotic poetry and brought the woman for a while to live at his mother's home. A grandmother died insane, a brother killed himself. (But suicide dogged the Hiss family, too; his father cut his throat, a sister died of drinking disinfectant.)

"Did you perjure yourself in previous testimony?" thundered Stryker. "Yes, yes, of course," said Chambers calmly in the low murmur he uses on the witness stand.

The prosecuting attorney, Thomas F. Murphy,

cross-examined Hiss, moving heavily and ponderously after one of the most nimble-footed witnesses who ever took the stand, who weighed the value of every word and who never seemed to be there when his pursuer closed his trap. Hiss's wistful, demure wife Priscilla supported her husband in a lilting, little-girl voice clutched by nervousness. The two cut attractive figures in contrast to gloomy, stocky Chambers and his plain, dour wife. But regardless of personalities, there the unexplained documents were. Somebody had taken them. Both men were calm and unshaken. The enigma remained.

There was the mute evidence of the Woodstock typewriter. The Government called a manuscript expert who said the 68 papers had been typed on this machine. He described personal idiosyncracies that were identical, he asserted, in these documents and sample specimens of Mrs. Hiss's work at the typewriter. The defence lawyers contested this evidence solely by testimony that the machine was not in the possession of Alger Hiss or being used at the time under discussion. It had been given, they asserted, to the sons of the Hiss Negro maid, Clytie Catlett. The point was uncertain. The discharged jurors said they found it hard to understand.

The trial raises questions of the national mood. When the sensational charges were made a year ago, the election was in full blast. Mr. Truman took cognisance of them by branding the affair a "red herring." The incident had considerable political importance. "Ah ha," cried conservatives, "this proves our point that the whole New Deal if not Communist-inspired was at least 'soft' toward Communism." It is this writer's feeling that much of that attitude has now evaporated. The events are long in the past. The election is over. There has been a slight but nevertheless noticeable reduction in tension with Russia. The public is vastly interested in the Hiss riddle but it is on the personal rather than international side. It reads the trial as detective fiction not history. Theoretically a man is innocent till proved guilty. But, under the freedom of American press comment, nearly all aspects of the case are being canvassed. Under such circumstances, if Hiss is innocent he is a terribly injured man if no verdict is finally reached. Yet the question raised is whether he was once a fellow-traveller not whether he is now; nobody seriously makes that charge any longer. RICHARD STROUT

## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

*From "The New Statesman," July, 1924*

**How to Make Friends . . .**

We do not suggest that the Soviet Government ought to change anything of real substance, but only its diplomacy. If the Russians would behave with common sense, instead of like children, we are convinced that they could, without abating one jot or tittle of their principles, get the full agreement that both of us want.

**Forgotten Lesson.**

The industrial progress of Germany has been too rapid, with the result that it is to a great extent a country of *nouveaux riches* . . . If we wish for the complete moral disarmament of Germany, we must do nothing to help the German industrial magnates to crush the German workmen and do everything that we can, indirectly, to help the German workmen to recover themselves.

**Bankers' Remedy.**

If the Bank of England and the City have made up their minds that the advantages of further deflation outweigh its disadvantages, it seems desirable that the rest of the country should be officially apprised of the position. What does Parliament think on this issue? And where does the Labour Government stand?

## LETTERS FROM TWO ISLANDS

*Isle of Wight*

. . . We went into Newport, the night before last, to see the film *Passport To Pimlico*, and found it great fun. I hope you will have a chance to see this film; but I doubt it. And the excuses for not widely distributing British films in America always fascinate me. One runs something like this: "When you folks make good motion pictures, we'll be glad to take 'em." Well, some of our films are good, others not so good, and others again are an outrage. And clearly this is true of Hollywood films too, but we have had to take these, good, bad and horrible, for the last thirty years now. Even when our people were up to the neck in the war, they had to take war films concocted six thousand miles away in Beverly Hills. In 1940 I helped to write a film called *The Foreman Went to France*, hoping that it would be widely shown in America. (Thanks not to me but to the men who had just returned from France, this film had the best German invasion scenes I ever saw). Was it shown in America? Not on your life! Then there is the other excuse: "Our audiences can't understand what your actors are saying." Yet *our* audiences—who of course may be much brighter than those in America—have had to understand (or stay away from films) during the past twenty years the nasal twang of the New Englander, the negroid drawl of the South, the staccato barking of the Middle-Western business men, the mysterious yelping of the mountain folk, the deep, slow talk of the cowboys, the patter of American show business, East Side Jewish mothers, Italian gangsters in Chicago, in fact every noise that comes out of your huge melting pot. So much for that excuse. And the man I would respect on your side would be the man who rose and boldly declared: "To hell with this talk about whether British films are good enough or easy to understand. To me they represent competition, and as a believer in free private enterprise I don't want any competition." Now, I would cry, you're talking, brother.

In *Passport To Pimlico*, as you may have read in any of our papers you still receive, a small group of families in the heart of Pimlico discover they are subjects of the Duke of Burgundy and members of an independent state. Thus the rules and regulations of H.M. Government do not apply to them. This was hilariously greeted by the audience, the other night. Most people here are sensible enough to understand that in the situation we are placed in now many major controls are necessary. We have to discipline ourselves. I think many of the controls are enforced with foolish inflexibility, largely because minor officials lack either the power or the intelligence to make exceptions. I have felt for a long time that one of the primary tasks of the Labour Government should have been to devise new and far more flexible and commonsensical methods of administration. Cumbersome and pedantic methods that might pass when Government departments were small simply will not do when such departments are gigantic and still growing and interfere with our lives all over the place. Even the most public-spirited and progressive citizen begins to feel resentful when he finds the Circumlocution Office down every street and wonders when he will be besieged by Barnacles. And here, I think, the Labour men have lacked insight. They ought to have tried to give with one hand while taking away with the other. Thus, if more industrial and similar controls were necessary, as I believe them to have been, then they should have relaxed some of our older social controls, so that people might have felt that what they lost on the swings they gained on the roundabouts. We ought not to be made to feel that we have less personal liberty all round than our fathers had. Somewhere the pressure ought to have been relaxed. It is the failure here that encourages so many of our holidaymakers returning from abroad, often from countries that are really in an appalling mess, to grumble at what is on the whole the much more equitable and sensible system here. And it is this failure that made the audience, the other night, applaud the newly discovered freedom, soon to slip into chaos, of the Burgundians of Pimlico. Our Cabinet ministers might do well to keep away from idiotic film *premières* and to try popping into the local cinema now and again.

I hate to grumble at an exceptionally original and entertaining film, but I wish this story could have been taken out of the atmosphere of rather bogus Cockney high spirits (a great weakness of our films, just as shoddy values and dramatic *clichés* are the weakness of Hollywood films), and we had been given a dryly ironic picture of the emergence of a new small independent state. Then all the solemn humbug of national sovereignty could have been amusingly pilloried. We could have seen these grocers and fishmongers invested with those immense diplomatic privileges that free our ministers and their senior officials from all the restrictions that they invent for the rest of us. We could have seen pressure groups of ironmongers and old clothes dealers at work on their government. We could have heard the cynical facts transformed into noble statements of patriotic sentiment and idealistic feeling. We might have been given a glimpse of that inevitable corruption by power which seems now to have speeded up all its melancholy processes. However, the film as it stands is capital entertainment. Why not *insist* upon seeing it? Perhaps people like us, my friend, simply do not do enough insisting. We allow any little organised gang to dictate how we shall live.

Yes, I have just begun reading Bernard Berenson's autobiographical sketch, and it is as delightful as I thought it would be. J. and I paid two visits to him in Florence last year; and she was at once enchanted by him, and I enjoyed his company enormously, although we immediately began to differ sharply, partly because both of us have the trick of mischievously enlarging and stiffening our opinions for the sake of debate and devilment. Some people find him intimidating; but though I go through life in terror of bulls, horses and almost all dogs, I am never afraid of other men unless they are mad drunk and weigh at least two hundred pounds. (This is not courage; probably conceit and insensitiveness.) "B.B." is of course a formidable personage, like the tiny aged ruler of some mysterious multi-lingual empire. He is still a legend in an age when legendary figures are fast disappearing. He is old enough to have known everybody and yet miraculously contrives to enjoy the company of young artists and to appreciate what they are doing. (Here, I suspect, he is younger than I am in his attitudes.) Yet in this autobiographical essay he appears to be wondering about himself rather sombrely. Has some vital element been missing from this long and very successful life of his? He made me wonder too, not narrowly about him but about certain types of humanity.

The aesthete, for example. Though I enjoy the company of creative artists of all kinds, I never feel at home with the aesthete. He brings to life in me a suspicious Northern barbarian.

He is altogether too cultivated for me. Although I would be prepared to champion the arts in a pub just outside a steel mill, the presence of an aesthete or two immediately creates in me a prejudice against the life of fine taste and exquisite states of mind. I begin to feel like a dog among cats. Ironically enough, I often feel that the aesthete makes the same mistake about the arts that the sheer Philistine does. The latter thinks they are like the icing on the cake of life. He can do without icing, so he can do without the arts. The aesthete cannot do without the arts because he wants to nibble away at icing, whether he eats the cake or not. Neither of them, it seems to me, thinks of the arts as part of the leaven in the dough of life. That is why there is something remote, artificial, chilly, about the aesthete and his delicate enthusiasm.

And then there is the expatriate. He never seems to me to be sitting solidly in his saucer. By leaving home for ever, he blocks up some of his main arteries. All those brilliant Americans—Henry James, Edith Wharton, Logan Pearsall Smith, and the rest—who took refuge in Europe produced work of great talent but lacking blood and guts. It may be that some of them acquired other valuable qualities, born of detachment and supremely sensitive observation, but I doubt if these qualities compensate us for what is missing. A number of important English writers have settled in America during the past dozen years. That is their affair; and I for one have never blamed them for quitting this overcrowded and battered old island. Nevertheless, I cannot think of one of them whose work has improved. They are no longer nourished by English life, and as yet cannot draw sufficient nourishment from American life. They do not know where they are. I suspect that secretly they often wonder what they ought to write about. Unless the political police are after him, the artist will do well to stay at home, where even his doubts and difficulties may help to ripen him. To re-write Shakespeare: We must endure our not going hence, even as our coming hither: Ripeness is all.

Yesterday I met a lady from Eire, who told me that she saw in a small railway station there a notice: "The last train will not run to-night." And ever since, I have felt much better.

J. B. PRIESTLEY

## OVER BAGHDAD

Water towers; the river; the golden tombs
Of Kadhimain; and wider, beyond the city,
The circles of green with fountaining branches
Of leaves and dates, the craters, like bombs
That have missed their mark, lie out in trenches,
Where the tilted wingspan
Of sight crowds the whole town to an entity.
But the view is deceptive, as now we struggle
To achieve a poise in the air, and the mountains
Stiffen under cloud, with only behind us the struggle
Of stone round the river, the boats clenched like crows,
The pitiful palaces, the pylons shining in fountains—
Whose real mirage, like belief, grows
From the fear of our sandprints in history.
For the town and the desert are not, just not
As we see them, for the first time whole, unwrapped
From the clouds in an auburn morning; the rot
Set in, like a worm in the stone of these relics, ages
Ago, and we can never go back, tapping the half-mapped
Charts of a pottery dynasty.
We are what we are *now;* our natures our real cages.

ALAN ROSS

# The Arts and Entertainment

## A CHILDREN'S OPERA

THE Cheltenham Opera House. Gallant, optimistic name: only "Royal" is lacking. A German visitor, inquiring for the *Spielplan*, might get a shock; but this year he would find at least one week's opera, provided by the English Opera Group, *Albert Herring*, *The Rape of Lucretia* and *Let's Make an Opera*, "An Entertainment for Young People." There are plenty of these in the house, long rows full of schoolboys and schoolgirls; plenty of grown-ups too, and a fair sprinkling of the retired and elderly who have made Cheltenham their autumnal home. After *Albert Herring* (a popular success last year, at the Town Hall), the names of Benjamin Britten and Eric Crozier evidently inspire confidence.

As we enter we are given sheets, some containing the words only, and some the music, of four "audience songs"; we eye these, and our neighbours, apprehensively. The songs don't look at all easy: one is in 5/4 time, another has some tricky stretches of cross rhythm, a third contains queer simultaneous bird-noises. Lights out; curtain up; no music. Where are we? An invisible man on the stage and an invisible small boy in the audience call out to each other; it's a rehearsal, an opera, some sort of children's opera. Two grown-ups are seen dealing with a hundred last-minute emergencies; half a dozen children unconcernedly wander in and out. Awkward bits are tried over; we learn the elementary principles of staging and opera-writing; we find that our opera is about a chimney-sweep, an enchanting small boy called Sammy. Meanwhile, the conductor, Mr. Norman del Mar, turns up, and coaxes us with all kinds of ingenious flattery into trying the choruses; they're not so hard after all, in fact quite infectious. By this time, what with the singing, and the queer bird-noises, and above all the Aldeburgh children, a wave of English good humour has spread all round the house.

An interval. Amusement in the foyer: chaffinches compare notes with owls, herons with turtle doves. Part Two consists of the children's opera itself, *The Little Sweep*; the orchestra is small, even for Britten: a string quartet, two pianists at a single piano, a percussion man. The audience provides its own overture with the 5/4 "Swee-ee-eep!" song; on the rise of the curtain the tune is taken up, with alterations, on the stage. The action is *Peter Grimes* in miniature: another bullied child, but no ambiguity this time about the character of the bully. Date, 1810; the nursery of a large Suffolk manor house; a poor shivering little sweep, sold to wicked Black Bob, is about to be sent up his first chimney. The humanitarian children are shocked; they conceal him in a toy cupboard, give him a bath, finally contrive his return home and future happiness. All this is conveyed in three brief scenes, separated by the audience-choruses. Enchanting musical episodes flash past; one in particular, when all the children in turn wish Sammy good morning, and with his shy and serious smile that engaging urchin replies: "Morning, morning!"—one upward interval, and one downwards, a tiny example of the charm and ingenuity with which Britten can conjure music out of the simplest ingredients. The art displayed in *The Little Sweep* is like that of his folk song arrangements: small, clean and perfect. And the ending is unforgettable: the rescued Sammy riding homewards in a coach. In ten seconds, without a curtain-drop, the carriage is improvised—out of nothing, with twirling parasols for wheels and little Sammy in front on the rocking horse, while stage and audience sing together the last and simplest and most ravishing little tune of all, the Coaching Song: "The horses are champing, eagerly stamping... the gravel is churning, look! they are turning... they swing from the bye-road on to the high road..." A magical moment of pure happiness. Not a soul in the house but wanted an encore; wanted to keep the pretty and absurdly touching little tableau in front of his eyes a little longer, and in his ears the frosty D major jingle with its faint, clear clip-clop along the January roads of childhood.

Of course it's all very slight, an occasional piece, so occasional that it may not survive the dispersal of the present company. But there's more real music in a few bars of it than in some of the pretentious "symphonic poems" of the previous week; and even those who regret the amount of time and energy spent by Britten on the ephemeral can hardly fail to enjoy this delicious morsel. What has been going on, all this while, in the depths of his musical personality we shall know better when we have heard the first performance of his big *Spring Symphony* broadcast from the Holland Festival.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR.

## PARIS: SUMMER, 1949

IN Paris, towards the end of June, an Englishman reflects that he is farther from the sea than at any point in Britain. The white dust lines your lips; the air is dryer, thinner, almost, and more transparent than at home; a leafy plant behind balcony bars (Braque), somewhere on the face of the house opposite, seems so near, clear and sharply defined that you feel you could put out a hand and touch it. The slight opacity which its humidity presumably bestows on English air is missing; light comes down evenly on all the surfaces of all the houses in Paris; and it comes from a great height, for the sky there in June is immensely high, streaked only by a few strands of taut, thin vapours (Derain). Corners of dingy yards, or peeling paint at the bottom of a canyon in the Quartier Latin have a glow, their surfaces saturated by the calm, pervading light, many times reflected: the dirtiest, dullest surface is luminous (Chardin: Utrillo).

Physically, and by reason of its climate, this city is perfectly equipped for its role as the capital of Europe's visual arts. But there are other reasons for its power to attract Europe's painters. Chief of these is that so many artists have practised their art here that the place itself is a potent stimulus and inspiration. To sit in a Paris café is to be at once in touch with the raw material of a half a century of masterpieces.

But in spite of all this, and in spite of the wide popular interest in painting—and both are intoxicating to a painter from London—one feels there is a deadness about a vast amount of the work of the younger painters in Paris to-day. A certain undoubted intelligence and a remarkable degree of good taste are everywhere manifest in their shows. Yet these are qualities which pall if we are treated to a surfeit of them—especially when something even more essential is missing. One feels that hardly any of the younger artists have pushed their own work far enough: there are numerous categories (and French criticism seems much concerned with shuffling names into and out of critical pigeon-holes), from the *non-figuratif* to the *expressionist*, yet one feels that too many artists still have too much in common. The ideas now current are intelligent and so the artistic level of a very considerable number of painters is high. Perhaps we might say of thirty or even forty that they show great promise: yet surely no one under 60 has truly "arrived."

Another reason for this monotony, however, is undoubtedly the lack of detachment, in both a physical and a spiritual sense, which modern artists suffer. Every painter in every land is increasingly "in touch" with everything done everywhere else—especially with everything done in Paris. The balance which should exist in every painter between his influences and his own pri-

vate, unique sources of energy and vision is increasingly tipped, everywhere, in favour of the external influence. And the "external influence" most universally felt is Paris. The second International Congress of Art Critics, which has just completed its rather empty, self-perpetuating proceedings in Paris (its most positive energy went into designing the constitution of an International Association of art critics and historians) will, it seems, prove to have been yet another unconscious agent of this sterilising process of the "internationalisation" of art. The keynote of the conference was that the speedier exchange of more and more articles, reproductions, and so on, was just what the artists in every country needed. Thus the Congress merely gave another shove to a boulder that has already converted itself into a landslide . . . which is, perhaps, all that such organisations can do. Certainly no international congress can hope to buttress the essential *interior* morale of the creative artist, in whatever land.

I must reserve a review of the younger painters in Paris for another article, and turn now to the world-famous. Some sixty-five new paintings by Picasso now at La Maison de la Pensée Française show him extending the vision of the Occupation portraits to the subjects of his new domesticity: his young wife and child and the nursery gaiety of toys and bright colours. The same fabulous formal invention and a new gay set of colours characterise this later period. The use of the paint itself, however, is different: the mixture is frequently thicker than ever—perhaps a quarter of an inch deep sometimes—and the energy the picture radiates spurts directly from this rapidly churned sea of juicy pigment. Indeed, the pigment *is* the emotion. Particularly interesting was a new device for her head in several portraits of his wife. Over the space where the head comes is a blank, flat, white oblong with the face and curls of hair drawn, with the utmost economy, in quick black single Matisse-like lines. At first it looks as though he had pinned a sheet of drawing paper, bearing a sketch in parody of Matisse, over the head in his painting: for the rest of the picture is composed of utterly different colours and textures.

But exciting though they are, these latest Picasso's proclaim more clearly than ever his role of "inventor." He is feverishly Romantic. To unburden his brain of an unending stream of formal or poetic suggestions is the immediate function of his painting. He cannot be hoping to make something solid and enduring. It is even possible that the future will look upon these canvases as sketches or cartoons. For pictures that are pictures, built slowly, to endure, we must turn to Braque.

It is precisely because Braque's painting, from 1940 to the present moment, increasingly achieves a monumental calm that I believe him to be the greatest figure in painting to-day. Everywhere we see the results of the triumph of Picassian modes of expression: many of those among the talented young, who by nature were calm and contemplative, have smashed themselves striving to emulate the dramatic, unpredictable, rapid mode of the Spanish genius. The world is full of the sad results of these attempts to become, in effect, Spanish. Without the loss of an atom of poetry or metaphysical significance, Braque has erected a monument to permanent, calm happiness: in fact, to the most permanent attributes of great painting. His present canvases display what I can only call a complex simplicity and a calm intensity. For these reasons Braque strikes me as the most advanced painter of our time: but what is revolutionary about Braque is that he offers stability in place of the restless perpetual revolution of Picasso. Further, the richness of his invention, coupled with its essential solidity, could provide the most profitable basis or point of departure for younger artists. Unlike Picasso, or Matisse, who themselves complete most of what they begin, Braque gives us something impersonal to get hold of, something that is valid as a building material.

PATRICK HERON

## THE MOVIES

### "Private Angelo," at the Carlton
### "Poet's Pub," at the New Gallery and the Tivoli

Mr. Peter Ustinov is still so young that he can afford to hover between many roles. He is a brilliant mimic: that side of him he continues, I believe, to indulge in private. He is a good actor—though exactly how good and of how wide a scope it would be a little difficult to say. His plays combine intelligence and ingenuity, and belong very much to the stage, while betraying an impatience with it; his films, so far, have been high-spirited, slapdash, clever, rich in satire and appreciation of the English character, but curiously bungling and lackadaisical of effect. *Private Angelo* is certainly the best of them, and the most technically proficient. Yet that lackadaisical influence remains.

Partly this is due to the fact that the character of Angelo, as played by Mr. Ustinov, itself radiates a lumpish, shambling-sensitive charm. I doubt whether the unheroic Italian soldier of Mr. Linklater's novel lounged quite so resistantly through his Schweik-like adventures between the fire of three armies. Mr. Ustinov has imported his own comic density, which sometimes captivates, while sometimes seeming to throw away the whole point of a scene. Thus, the scenes where Private Angelo meets with the English Commandos talking ("I miss the desert myself—you knew everyone there"), and has later to share in their hair-raising exploits, provide comedy of the first order: an attack on a bridge held by the Germans is unexpectedly cut off by two small girls leading a herd of cows; the opposing forces have to peer through a forest of legs or jump up and down on parapets to keep track of one another; and Angelo is sent into the thick of the herd to reconnoitre. All this takes place on a country bridge not five yards wide. It is as funny as a bit of Marx Brothers overcrowding, and yet recognisable tactics into the bargain.

But then against this must be set the sulkiness that elsewhere damps the adventure, to say nothing of attempts to graft on incidents in a mock-heroic key. Mr. Ustinov the director might have pointed out to Mr. Ustinov the actor that inexpressive sulks, while touching a new note of comedy, in time grow exasperating. They would make a small part, they undermine the full-length one. The overruling effect on this comedy of cowardice is rather as though Oblomov, forever embedded, were made the central figure of a three-act ballet. Given the interpretation of character, a nimble director could so have cut and capered as to keep the fun flying.

But here Mr. Ustinov acts, Mr. Ustinov directs, and the same hand has even laid out the script. There are endless opportunities for misjudgment and bias. The surprising thing is that, errors notwithstanding, *Private Angelo* turns out to be on the whole so funny and so true to life. It has, let me add, been beautifully photographed in an Italian landscape that will warm the senses of all Northerners; it has a lively heroine in Miss Maria Denis, and if Mr. Godfrey Tearle as a military grandee is made to contradict himself, the pleasure of seeing and listening to him remains.

Mr. Ustinov—I am more than ever convinced—has a touch of comic genius. At the moment it may sometimes conceal almost as much as it reveals; besides lacking skill, he is, one suspects, cross-grained by nature. Given a documentary theme (in *School for Secrets*), he will let loose force; given straight fantasy (*Vice Versa*) he will wreck it with caricature; given Mr. Linklater's good-natured trooper, he will make him difficult-minded. When this disability finally disappears, we shall look to him for the comedy at our own expense which, both on screen and on stage, we so sadly need. His Angelo is far more English than Italian.

*Poet's Pub* (another Linklater product, by the way) is altogether too flattering and mild. Still I found its idyll diverting: you won't come across such a pubbe anywhere till the Great Exhibition of 1951. What oak! What aristocrats! Miss Joyce Grenfell brings in with a rush the real accents of native culture, and there are moments during a Tudor pageant when a rather thin concoction boils up surprisingly.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

## RADIO NOTES

SUNDAY listening has long been one of my chief pleasures. The "*Prom.*," *Music Magazine*, *The Critics*, they pass away the morning agreeably. When the Critics fade out, at 12.55, one feels a faintly satiated sadness, prelude to the General Weather Forecast. I usually break off until the Sunday afternoon concert at 3 p.m. (The Light Programme offers one very little through these hours.) Last Sunday, for a change, I risked listening to *Country Magazine*, which ought to go well with one's midsummer salad. I had occasionally tried this programme before, and been jarred by it. Criticism is perhaps irrelevant, in that the programme must be unshakably popular. Yet surely there is in it a very slight falsification of country feeling, just enough to put the whole thing out of tune? Can this be what listeners like? One would not dream of questioning the knowledge of Mr. Ralph Wightman, who squired it, but his unbuttoned oozy-woozy jocularity has got the feel of a professional trick, the Gresham's Law of continuous broadcasting perhaps. From time to time all the speakers burst into bucolic guffaws; but they still seemed closer to the microphone than the earth.

I had also respectfully avoided Gilbert Harding's programme. *The World Goes By*, which comes on at 4.30. It seemed, heard for the first time, appalling, alarming, grotesque: not *bad*. Gilbert Harding must be one of the gloomiest compères in the world, but it is an impressive gloom, lit by flashes of cosmic facetiousness. "I'm afraid the diet might take the gilt off the glacier for me." The figures he introduces to the microphone are in keeping with this sinister mood. There was a man from Antarctica—"Seal liver is delicious! Seal brain fried as fritters is delicious!"—and a terrifying psychiatrist, who showed how he interviews mere people for jobs, expecting from them a sort of eight-point path of unattainable achievement.

Even Gilbert Harding's team raised their eyebrows at the standard set by the psychiatrist, and Harding got a flat, glum satisfaction—his happiest moment, I suspect—from telling us so. Of course, if the programme were not looked at in this light, it might appear to be rather a bore. I didn't find it so.

The best radio antidote to the heat wave was Robert Flaherty's account of the making of his film, *Louisana Story*. It was like streams of cool water coming into the room. A certain amount of cultural consumer resistance had come between me and the seeing of the film, but, after hearing Flaherty, I went at once. It may seem curious, the radio description gave far more pleasure than the thing described. Flaherty is, I think, a man whose imaginative energy is greater than his power to create. The microphone caught the finest nuances of his intentions, as well as the warmth and warm shade of the man himself, whereas the disengaged screen product was jerky, scrappy, sometimes sentimental. It is curious, too, that the various noises of the derrick, which Flaherty explained, were very much more impressive and distinct on the air than in the cinema. There must be some moral here, which escapes me. We also had the pleasure of hearing Virgil Thomson's music, which survives separation from the track. The alligator music is extremely good.

It is too hot for more than a gentle reproach, but I do wish that the Third Programme, when translating song-titles from the German or French, would correct an often-noticed tendency to prefer the pretty, poetic word to the simple one. Why must *Einsamkeit* be always "solitude",

never "loneliness"? "La Mort Des Amants" means "The Death of the Lovers," not "The Dying Lovers." And it was a brutal shock, on Saturday night, when Miss Elizabeth Schwarzkopf was singing Schubert songs, to hear the beginning of Goethe's wonderful verse "Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass" translated into "Whose bread was never *salt* with tears." The literal rendering, "He who never ate his bread with tears," is so much more simple and powerful, besides being what Goethe meant.

MARK OGILVIE

**Yves Montand, at the Saville Theatre**

No one who enjoys that curious indescribable flavour called "star quality" should miss the French singer Yves Montand. He occupies the last three-quarters of an hour of a cabaret show, put on rather inappropriately one would think, at the Saville Theatre twice nightly, once before dinner at 6.30 and again after dinner at 9.0. Yves Montand derives from the tradition of French artists like Maurice Chevalier but he remains "absolutely modern." He comes on to a bare stage in a plain brown shirt and trousers with no evident make-up; but from that moment we are all caught in the infection of his vitality, the contagion of his gaiety. He creates, with no props but his sole personality, a world of his own, tracing it variously in a factory worker at Luna Park, in the career of a boxer, Battling Joe, and in a young fellow contorted with Jive. It is a world shimmering with the excitement of being alive, but not swallowed uncritically; there is a measure of sour with the sweet, of gin with the dubonnet, but the mixture is exact, no trace of the sickly. M. Montand, one may reasonably prophesy, if he goes on as he has begun, will soon be a household name. Mr. Cliff Gordon provides one hilarious sketch of a subaltern deputising for the Education Officer at a French lesson in the Forces. Mr. Eddie Vitch gives two brilliant pieces of miming; and unforgettable from the otherwise rather tame first half are Miss Margery Dunkels' impressions of our leading actresses. Her Vivien Leigh and her Peggy Ashcroft, in particular, are devastating criticism.

# Correspondence

## ATLANTIC ARGUMENT

SIR,—For the American reader there exists an ironic relationship between himself and your two recent articles concerning two overcrowded islands. In "Malta To-day" THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION quotes: "Our real problem, said one of Malta's young ministers, is simply that there are too many of us . . . the Maltese are at last realising that Britain cannot, and will not, subsidise the island for ever." In "Population Policy" [for Britain], the conclusion is that although "there is no case for any further substantial expansion of the population of this crowded island," nevertheless "the aim of population policy should be to maintain the replacement level by endeavouring to secure 24 children in every 10 families instead of the actual average of 22." Crudely stated, this affair may be put as an algebraic equation: as Britain is to the island of Malta, so the United States is to the island of Britain. In Malta the problem is to extract from the British benefactor food for a population of 300,000, while attempting to expand the social services and to absorb 8,000 new babies each year. In Britain the problem is to extract from America, including Canada, enough food for a population climbing toward 52,000,000, while attempting to enlarge the social services, in particular the family allowances encouraging births of still more children.

Now, although you wouldn't know it from the above paragraph, the writer of this letter has an overwhelming affection for England and Scotland, and for just this reason, of affection and deep admiration, begs THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION to open its columns to a complete discussion of the United Kingdom's most serious dilemma. Is it to be assumed that Marshall Aid or its equivalent will continue into the indefinite future? Even if Marshall Aid continues, is it wise to maintain on your island a population that must eat by bleeding itself white for exports?

In answer to the first question I should say that Marshall Aid must indeed continue. Why does England not look the food situation full in the face and discover where the meals for the next fifty years are coming from? Then on this side of the Atlantic someone might know better what to do. To mention a few hard facts, if it is dollars you need:—

(a) The glory of British production has been in her craftsmanship. But there is a limit, believe it or not, to America's capacity for purchasing beautiful merchandise. In the first place our money for luxuries is not spread over a wide segment of the population. In the second place not many of our people have a trained or a nice taste; they are inclined to buy washing machines, clothing made less expensively on Seventh Avenue than in Bond Street, and television sets for home amusement.

(b) One-fifth of the people in the United States are themselves inadequately fed.

(c) For all the good-farming-practices propaganda of the Department of Agriculture, most wheat and corn growers of the former dust-bowl area are not converted to soil-saving methods: contour ploughing, terracing, legume planting. They are so sure they will have another dry cycle, in which event the soil will blow away anyhow. So why not mine it at present high prices while the rains still fall? Perhaps if the Mid-West is depleted or the dust bowl returns, Britain will have made a trade agreement with the Ukraine?

None of the above is a pleasant idea. As a Member of Parliament said to me: "We continue to encourage births because we think the world needs more Englishmen." He is so right! On my recent visit to Britain I saw more beautiful babies and more beautiful young children than I have ever seen anywhere. It is wonderful to see them, wonderful to have them—if the ration permitted in your country to an adult will be enough to nourish them when they grow up.

Against the dangers and distresses of overcrowding, the sapping of vitality, the packed trains, the austerity, the constant necessity for emigration, your argument for an increasing population cites the slow process of weakening consonant with a larger proportion of the old. Possibly so, but the demographers say it is only a question of time before the United States will have to adjust itself to this situation also. You are just a few steps ahead in the population emergency, as you are ahead in many of the cultural and social attitudes essential to an enlightened civilization.

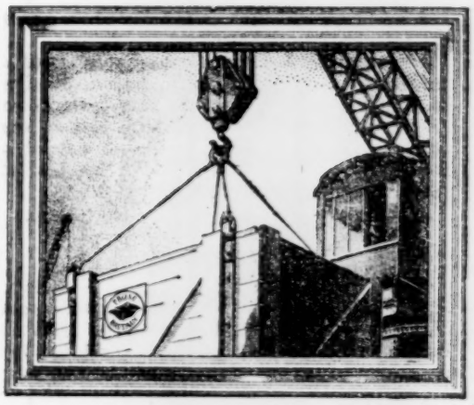
It is easy to understand why the Government must consider the subject of British births to be an unstrategic discussion, for mammas and papas have votes and so will babies in due time. But THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION is not standing for office, and Marshall Aid supporters on this side of the Atlantic will soon need something more than a hand to mouth policy for long-range planning.

M. C. H. FLINT

Sioux Falls,
South Dakota.

## THE FRENCH POLICE

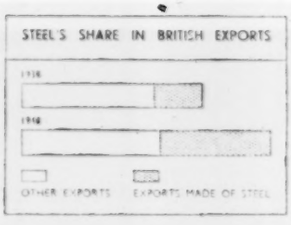
SIR,—It was with great interest that I read the article by Mr. Robert Payne on the student activities in Paris at about 5 p.m. on July 1, because I also was there at the time. I was not in the same district as Mr. Payne, but was walking westwards along the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, when I suddenly realised a hundred or more students were all over the road singing and shouting. Just then two police vans arrived, the police jumped out and the chase began. Nothing could have been less like the scenes described by Mr. Payne. I saw no blows struck, not even by fists, there was only good-natured scuffling. The "arrests" were generally released at the next side street, without going near the police van. There were shouts of "A l'Etoile," and further on I saw another, and similar, police charge. It was obvious that a good time was had by all, and I was reminded of the student rags in London in which I used to take part, except that this Paris affair was undoubtedly more gentle. I saw only two students being taken away in vans, and they were laughing

# Steel takes the strain

The dependence of British shipping upon British steel is plain enough. The Queen Mary is made of steel. So too is the salt-caked tramp. What matters more to you is what goes into both.

**STEEL BUYS FOOD.** Exports of goods made from steel are twice their pre-war quantity and now represent 47% of our total exports. Manufactures of British steel are playing a telling part in buying the raw materials and the food that we can't ourselves supply.




**PRICES HELD DOWN.** This vital job for recovery can only be done by building up output and holding prices down—by a steel industry that, to be bald, works efficiently. That efficiency is established beyond question by the record figures of output, and it is underlined by the low cost of our steel—lower to-day than almost anywhere else.

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**STEEL**

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BRITISH IRON AND STEEL FEDERATION

and waving to their cheering friends and the smiling bystanders on the pavements.

I am convinced that the article is an hysterical travesty of the truth, and its conclusions ridiculous, so that its publication can do nothing but harm. As you have devoted nearly a page to this bitter attack on the French nation, I hope you will publish this letter so that your readers may see how the incident appeared to another observer.

138 Farnaby Road, Bromley, Kent — JOHN A. HILL

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SIR,—I read Robert Payne's article with interest, but consider that he is wrong in one assumption. He seems to believe that the brutality of the French Police in Paris dates from the time of the Nazi occupation. I can assure Mr. Payne that long before the war and on several occasions I have witnessed the same cruelty and beating up which he experienced and which came to him as such a shocking surprise. The French police has always been so badly paid that it could only attract the wrong type of man—and this type has come to be feared, hated and despised, and he in turn takes it out of anyone unfortunate enough to become his victim.

It might interest Mr. Payne to know that in 1938 I was brought to the same Police Station, Ste. Sulpice. I was not beaten up, but I had to spend 17 hours (including all night) sitting on a chair because I had left my passport in my hotel in Rue Bonaparte, perhaps five minutes' walk away. At last, next day they decided to send somebody to fetch my passport and I was dismissed without excuse or explanation. But that is only one story—I could tell him more.

47 Downshire Hill, Hampstead, N.W.3. — FRED UHLMAN

## THE BEN HECHT BAN

SIR,—It is generally agreed that as a medium of serious expression the film is severely hampered. Not only are there the demands of the box-office, but also those of the Censor. Now, with the recent announcement that the new Marx Brothers' film will not be shown in this country, we are again reminded of the existence of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, whose arbitrary rights empower them to judge what is fit or unfit for us to see.

It is almost two years since the C.E.A. chose to ban all further films with which Mr. Ben Hecht is associated. Many regretted at the time that the C.E.A. should ban an artist whose record of work reveals a creative force in the cinema. The professed reasons for the ban—the notoriety of Mr. Hecht—are contemptible. They reveal a pandering attitude to the supposed numbers who are influenced by the sensational press. The true reasons are unimportant. What is important, however, is that the C.E.A. should exercise, in effect, the powers of the Censor. Such action is repugnant to all those who believe in the merits of the film and are encouraging appreciation of good cinema. The obvious result is the impoverishment of the cinema and, moreover, the limitation of film-making to those who have no controversial views, thus confining the film to the trivial and puerile.

Is it too much to hope that the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association will establish an intellectual independence and self-respect by lifting the ban on Mr. Ben Hecht forthwith?

Tooting and District Co-operative Film Society. — WILFRED E. BEDFORD, *Secretary.*

## EDUCATION IN THE FORCES

SIR,—Mr. R. A. Buchanan is surely mistaken in saying: "No provision at all is made for my class of student, awaiting entrance to a university, which Joad considers in his article."

Educational facilities in the Army to-day, like facilities for entertainment, vary, though naturally not for the same reasons, from unit to unit. However, under the Army Education Scheme (Interim Period) provision is made for every type of student to do on an average three hours compulsory education per week, whether in order to learn the multiplication of decimals and eventually sit for the Forces Preliminary Examination, or in the case of those excused organised education by virtue of holding at least the minimum qualification, school certificate, to continue with private study. The key men in the implementation of this scheme are not, as Mr. Buchanan suggests, the personnel of the Royal Army Educational Corps, but the Commanding Officers on the spot. If the Commanding Officer considers, as many do, that education, except the most limited technical kind, is a waste of time and unbecoming to a soldier, he then neglects to implement the Army Education Scheme, or if it is implemented, is either apathetic towards it or in some cases actively opposes its further success.

It is therefore not "an improvement in the quantity and quality of Education Corps work" which might alleviate some of the frustration felt by the type of conscript mentioned by Joad, but an improvement in the approach of the Commanding Officer to work of the Royal Army Educational Corps in his unit. He it is who can make or mar their work and can, as most Service and ex-Service men will testify, do so much in other fields to mitigate some of the more pernicious effects of National Service mentioned by Joad in his article.

SERGEANT

## THE SHOW'S THE THING

SIR,—There can be little disagreement with the substance of Mr. Christie's article. Nevertheless, it would have formed a more valuable contribution to the solution of the problems raised, had it been less vague and more free from exaggerations and inaccuracies.

For the sake of brevity (and accuracy on my part), I will confine myself to only a few instances.

1. There is no British Acoustical Society, nor is there any need for it, since the subject of acoustics is already dealt with adequately by such bodies as the Physical Society and The Institution of Electrical Engineers.

2. An examination of architectural acoustics has been both made and published by the Acoustics Committee of the Building Research Board of the Department of Scientific & Industrial Research. I shall have pleasure in presenting my copy of this report to Mr. Christie.

3. While the old method of dimming stage lights may be bulky and incur a mean wastage of electricity of about 40 per cent., the new method involves a wastage nearer to 5 per cent. than to 2 per cent. As this wastage usually takes place only during a short span of time, it is not a good economic proposition to replace the old type of dimming equipment.

4. There is, as a rule, no need to provide a room for the modern dimming equipment, since, in practically all cases, it can be incorporated with the rest of the electrical control equipment on the usual control panel.

5. To insist that the acoustics of an auditorium should be independent of the number of people in it is unreasonable and involves unnecessary complications and even extravagance in the building construction. After all, most theatres would run at a loss if less than about two-thirds of the seats were occupied.

TANESTOL

## FRANCE AND VIETNAM

SIR,—In my dispatch on "France and Vietnam," which you published last week, there is an unfortunate error which I am anxious to correct. After re-reading Mr. Alsop's article in the *Herald-Tribune* I find that what he really says is not that America should try to come to terms with Ho Chi-Minh, but that she should offer "generous diplomatic, economic, and military aid to the independent Vietnam Government and army which the French are now permitting."

I had unfortunately overlooked the last part of the sentence and was obviously confused by the adjective "independent," as applied to Bao Dai, whom, earlier in the article, Mr. Alsop had denounced as a French puppet; he had also been generally disagreeable about the French and French "colonialism." What his proposal, therefore, amounts to is that no attempt should be made to make peace with Ho Chi-Minh, but that, instead of being a puppet of "French colonialism," Bao Dai should be turned into an American puppet. Only, when Mr. Alsop speaks of generous American *military aid,* does he not really mean that all the dirty work in the maintenance of the now American puppet would still have to be done by the despised French "colonials"? In Indo-China we have, in miniature, the same problem as elsewhere—and that is: who is to provide the cannon-fodder? Hence the French irritation with all American schemes of a "common Western defence line" which would, in any case, be manned by French troops.

No one can deny that many good opportunities were missed in the past of coming to terms with Ho Chi-Minh, but wide sections of French opinion still hold that it is not too late, and that it is better to make another attempt than to pursue a policy which does not enjoy the support of the people of Indo-China.

YOUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT

## PARTISAN TRAGEDY

SIR,—In his review of *Highway Forty,* Aylmer Vallance laments, by inference at least, the betrayal of those revolutionary principles which animated so many of the Italian partisans. He speaks of "Churchill's directive to abort revolution. . . . No doubt Italy had to be saved for democracy and de Gasperi; tourists might not be so well fed in the Rome of 1949 if the partisans had had their way."

Do not these words somewhat over-simplify the partisan tragedy?

While I agree with Mr. Vallance that Churchill abhorred the idea of turning the invasion of Europe into a social crusade, are the Western Allies the only villains of this particular piece? Surely the Soviet Union must also bear its share of guilt? Had the U.S.S.R. chosen the policy of friendly collaboration with the West in 1945, surely there would be Left-wing governments in France and Italy to-day, and the revolution dreamed of by the partisans might well have been peacefully accomplished?

Instead, Europe is split by a frontier kept in a state of perpetual tension. Liberty and free choice have never thrived in frontier States during troubled times. So the Left-wing partisans were sacrificed in Italy, on this side of the frontier, while the Right-wing partisans had to be eliminated in Poland on the other side of the frontier. The fact that the first were dialectically unimpeachable, and the second "Fascist beasts" is of little consequence. They were both, I submit, the victims of power politics.

The Priory, Corsham. — SIMON HARCOURT-SMITH

## CHRISTIAN SOCIALISTS

SIR,—At a recent conference of Socialist Christians at Church House, London, it was decided to found a Socialist Christian Research and Information Centre under the short title of "The 1950 Group." From this Centre pamphlets and other material will be published and information about speakers and lecturers will be available. At this Centre we hope to build up as complete a register as possible of Socialist Christians throughout the country, with whom we may from time to time communicate—in the first instance, probably, by means of an occasional newsletter.

We already have several hundred names. We seek many thosands more. We should be most grateful for the co-operation of any of your readers who are interested.

We also, necessarily, appeal for funds for a work which, we soberly claim, is vital to the future health of the Christian churches in our land and of the British Labour Movement. We hope, however, that nobody will be deterred by inability to contribute to our funds from sending us his name and address for the register. We also hope that no one will hesitate to send even the smallest gift.

All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, 10 Gerald Road, London, S.W.1. It is requested that signatures be written clearly. Cheques should be payable to "The Treasurer, 1950 Group."

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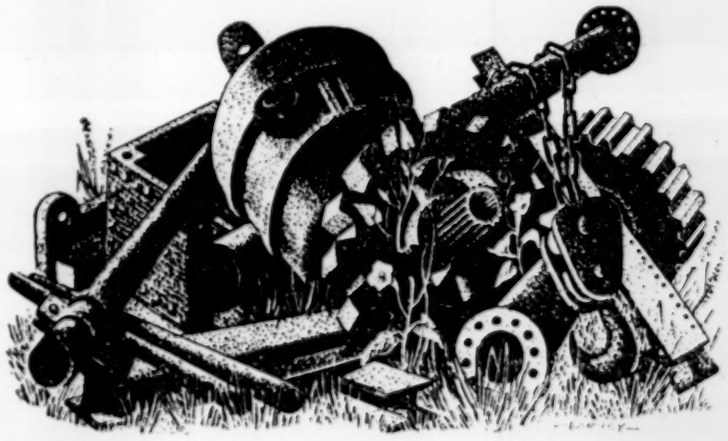

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# BOOKS IN GENERAL

KINGLAKE'S *Eothen** is one of the most warmly cherished and frequently reprinted of nineteenth-century travel-books; but just why this should be so seems to demand some explanation. The nineteenth century was full of travellers, more romantic, more inquisitive, often far more eloquent. Doughty, Burton, Borrow and Blunt cast larger personal shadows across the landscapes that they rode through; and Doughty and Borrow certainly were more accomplished stylists. Kinglake's line of march had been followed by many other voyagers: his narrative (which was completed after three attempts, and did not appear till nearly ten years after the happenings it dealt with) though it includes a succession of luminous passages, is uneven and fragmentary. The secret of the book's charm, we are bound to conclude, was vested in the author's character. Yet superficially there was nothing very remarkable about the short, energetic, good-humoured young Englishman, fresh from Eton under the rule of Keate and from Trinity College, Cambridge, who in 1834 traversed the Danube with his lively friend Lord Pollington and approached the silent walls of plague-infested Belgrade. His object was an unconventional holiday. A decade had elapsed since the death of Byron; but in Kinglake's composition lingered some vague Byronic hankerings. He longed to escape from the deadly reign of convention, from the "state of utter respectability" for which his antecedents had prepared him, and to "taste the cold breath of the earliest morn," leading a bright eastern cavalcade "through forests and mountain passes, through deserts and desolate plains," as befitted a spirited youth whose twin passions, in childhood were horsemanship and Homer.

Alexander William Kinglake, however, was no Byron; or perhaps it might be more accurate to say that he was no Childe Harold. If he had a tinge of the poet's romantic restlessness, he had also a fair share of Byron's underlying worldliness; and when the travellers had crossed the ominous border-line dividing a Western from an Eastern empire, and had left behind them the desolate Moslem city—its ruins and narrow windowless lanes, its huge wolfish dogs and heaps of immemorial rubbish, the still air, nevertheless being deliciously laden "with the scent of citron and pomegranate rinds scorched by the sun" and, around the bazaars, "with the dry, dead perfume of strange spices"—they spoke not of Belgrade and the tyranny of the Grand Turk, but of Keate and the Thames and Eton: "we rode along loudly laughing, and talked to the grave Servian forest, as though it were the 'Brocas clump'". Always ready to be impressed, and capable of recording his impressions in clear and vivid phrases, Kinglake did not feel that by failing to respond to a monument or landscape he had failed to do his duty. He rode up to it, paused to examine the place and, should it arouse no emotional echo, as briskly rode away again. Like Byron, he took "no antiquarian interest in ruins" and quickly tired of sight-seeing. He was merely an English gentleman travelling for amusement. The scion of a rich middle-class family he was destined to practise law as soon as he returned home; and this prospect gave an additional zest to the role of wandering milord. Pollington, who was of less resilient stuff, contracted a severe malady and presently threw in his hand. Kinglake went jogging on and on, with his English saddles and his "patent portmanteaus" his tea-cups and his tea-kettle and his jar of Irish butter, still wearing the London hat and waistcoat which earned him savage looks from the fanatical populace of Nablous, but which, characteristically, it did not occur to him to lay aside. Not for Kinglake was disguise or evasion. In Nablous he continued to stroll abroad; and in Damascus he walked on the raised pavement hitherto reserved for the feet of true believers. Luckily the British consul was a potent personage; and the disciplinary methods of Ibrahim Pasha, who refused to countenance racial persecution, were yet a painful memory. Moreover, Kinglake was evidently a brave man. He had confronted the plague in Belgrade, and had dared it to do its worst in the sand-paved streets of Cairo. A traveller who had witnessed the rages of Keate could endure with equanimity the "fixed glassy looks" of furious Moslem pietists.

The East stirred him, but it did not enslave. London was "the only place for fun," he might have said with Byron, and England the only country, in spite of the horrid conventionalism of English social habits, where existence was firmly based on the values that he recognised. The sight of a fellow Englishman was apt to move him deeply; and in mid-desert, between Gaza and Cairo, he enjoyed a curious chance-meeting. Day after day he had ridden forward through the incandescent sun-haze, listening to the groaning of his Arabs, the plaintive sighing of his camels. Then on the horizon appeared a quivering speck. It drew closer, assumed a definite form:

> In a little while we saw that one of the riders wore European dress, and at last the travellers were pronounced to be an English gentleman and his servant; by their side were a couple of Arabs on foot. . . . This Englishman, as I afterwards found, was a military man returning to his country from India. . . . As for me, I had come pretty straight from England, and so here we met in the wilderness about half way from our respective starting-points. As we approached each other it became with me a question whether we should speak. I thought it likely that the stranger would accost me, and in the event of his doing so, I was quite ready to be . . . sociable . . .; but still I could not think of anything that I had to say to him. . . . I was shy and indolent, and I felt no great wish to stop and talk like a morning visitor in the midst of those broad solitudes. The traveller perhaps felt as I did, for except that we lifted our hands to our caps, and waved our arms in courtesy, we passed each other quite as distantly as if we had passed in Pall Mall.

But the Arab attendants were less inhibited. They huddled together in excited converse, and Kinglake's camel herself suddenly "caught the social feeling." Since she declined to proceed, he wheeled her about, and "found that the gallant officer . . . was exactly in the same predicament. . . . He was the first to speak. Too courteous to address me, as if he admitted the possibility of my wishing to accost him from any feeling of mere sociability or civilian-like love of vain talk, he at once attributed my advances to a laudable wish of acquiring statistical information; and accordingly, when we got within speaking distance, he said 'I daresay you wish to know how the plague is going on at Cairo?'. . ."

From this agreeable passage it will be clear that Kinglake lacked neither an appreciation of drama nor a sense of social comedy. The meeting had a pleasantly ludicrous, but also a symbolic, aspect; and one cannot resist the suspicion that its upshot disappointed him. How much more appropriate to have converged and diverged with distant gentlemanly gestures—two Englishmen each in pursuit of the Englishman's historic destiny, each clinging to his traditional reserve, each politely but ever so remotely aware of the other's claim to recognition! Yet, notwithstanding insular quirks, Kinglake's outlook was undimmed by the cruder sort of patriotic prejudice. He had a variety of obvious English failings—a reluctance, for example, to take the faith and civilisation of alien races altogether seriously; but they were accompanied by an assemblage of corresponding virtues. Thus, he was open-minded, independent and sceptical, and felt a genuine contempt for any form of humbug. *Eothen* has been compared to *A Sentimental Journey*: and the comparison, though it may be over-emphasised, has much to recommend it. Both are intensely personal records: both are the work of writers who were concerned with the incidents of travel only in so far as those incidents had made a lasting mark on their own personal sensibility. That sensibility was keen but spasmodic. Sterne and Kinglake were equally attracted to women; and at the touch of sensuous beauty their restive imaginations flared up. Women to Kinglake were the colour and the light of life. Pretty women, of course; for, as he admitted with a frankness or a cynicism unusual in his period, "except when we refer to the beautiful devotion of the mother to her child, all the fine things we think and say about women apply only to those who are tolerably good-looking. . . ." The haggard Bedouin women, whom he observed around their squalid tents, "were not within the scope of the privilege. . . ." But the Christian maidens of "sweet Bethlehem" afforded an intoxicating spectacle, which pleased and interested him far more than his contemplation of the Holy Places. At Cairo he passed some happy hours, visiting the slave market and allowing it to be understood that he wished to buy a concubine—a young Circassian, according to the dealer as lovely as the full moon, who, once she had emerged from the mass of white linen in which she was enshrouded, displayed a "large face perfectly round and perfectly white," but otherwise without the smallest trace of the promised lunar fascination. It was at Nazareth, in the so-called home of the Virgin, that he permitted his voluptuous propensities the greatest imaginative licence. "Fevered with the zeal of an insane devotion to the heavenly queen of Christendom," he forgot the precepts of his sternly Protestant youth, and acclaimed a religion that bade him "fear God, and be pious, and yet not cease from loving." He did not hesitate to perform a perfervid obeisance:

> With a half consciousness—with the semblance of a thrilling hope that I was plunging deep, deep into my first knowledge of some most holy mystery, or some new, rapturous, and daring sin, I knelt, and bowed down my face till I met the smooth rock with my lips. One moment—one moment—my heart, or some old pagan demon within me woke up, and fiercely bounded—my bosom was lifted, and swung—as though I had touched her warm robe. One moment—one more, and then—the fever left me. I rose from my knees. I felt hopelessly sane. The mere world reappeared.

The last sentence seems particularly deserving of note. Always in Kinglake's moods there were these abrupt, unselfconscious returns to everyday existence. He was an amateur of feelings, just as he was an amateur of travel, and remained, so far as *Eothen* is concerned, an amateur in the art of writing. But there is no doubt that he was an extraordinarily brilliant amateur. And may it not have been just that shade of wayward amateurishness, coupled with his exquisitely sharp eye and magnificent descriptive *flair*, which has given him so firm a hold on the affections of his readers, in a country where undue professionalism is often slightly suspect? Beside Kinglake, Doughty

* *Eothen*. By A. W. Kinglake. *Lehmann*. 8s.6d.

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## *MR. PARK AT BAY?*

We are not sure that the amiable Mr. Park, whose horticultural musings are periodically recorded in "Critic's" column would approve of ***BOTANY FOR GARDENERS*** *(12/6)* by **R. P. Faulkner** late Head Gardener at University College, Nottingham. But for the intelligent amateur who wishes to know the whys and wherefores, and hopes thereby for better results, this fascinating and practical book can be strongly recommended. Sir Frederick Keeble, F.R.S., late Professor of Botany at Oxford warmly commends it, and there are a large number of illustrations—most of them by a member of the Rothamsted staff.

**Mr. Gavin Brown,** whose ***My River*** *(10/6)* has delighted enthusiasts of fishing and its literature, has now written ***ANGLER'S ALMANAC*** *(10/6)*, an informative, anecdotal annual for fishermen. The outstanding illustrations are again by Reginald Knowles, "whose drawings," said the *Times Lit. Suppt.* of his previous work, "really deserve the publisher's description of them as beautiful."

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JOHN LEHMANN


is a disturbing phenomenon—a zealot who forces himself to undergo appalling physical hardships, then spends year after laborious year grimly hammering out a prose style. Kinglake enjoyed his travels and, so far as we can judge from his book, he enjoyed the task of chronicling them. Doughty is the humourless professional artist: Kinglake, an itinerant man of the world who, having arisen from his knees, salutes the familiar world around him. The warm robe of the Queen of Heaven has dissolved beneath his finger-tips. We can imagine him brushing his shins, replacing the London hat and smiling at his own enthusiasm as he rewards the custodian monk and strides back into the sunlight. There was nothing about him of the romantic recluse, the aristocratic defender of lost causes, the visionary exile. His fate was not with Lady Hester Stanhope, dying in exalted solitude among rebellious tribesmen, not with Byron paying a legendary forfeit amid the gloom of Missolonghi. Returning to England as his relations intended, Kinglake took to law and politics, failed as a parliamentary speaker but composed the history of the Crimean War in eight impressive volumes.

PETER QUENNELL

## THE BALANCE OF POWER

**The Coming of the First World War 1878-1914.** By NICHOLAS MANSERGH. *Longmans*. 15*s*.

Uncertain whether they are scientists, artists, or merely pedagogues, historians easily fall victims to a guilty conscience. Ashamed of their profession, they seek to justify it and to prove that their academic ease is "socially-necessary labour time." History is supposed to teach a lesson: you discover what went wrong last time and so do better when the wheel comes round again. No period was studied so intensively and with such high hopes as the history of the generation before the first German war. Proof or, more usually, disproof of War Guilt was followed by the pursuit of War Origins. Once these were ascertained, it was supposed, War Cure could follow. The pundits of War Origins, whether in England, America, or Germany, were men of liberal mind, to whom the War was an incomprehensible tragedy, a purposeless shattering of their agreeable liberal existence. They started out with the view that it was a mistake and a misfortune; their researches of course confirmed this view. The English and American historians, with characteristic liberality of mind, leant over backwards in the effort to be fair to Germany; and the German historians, equally true to form, leant over forwards in the same effort. Thus all reached the same conclusion: no individual statesman or nation was to blame, the fault lay with the system of "international anarchy." Belgium and Germany, Serbia and Austria-Hungary, were equally guilty or guiltless. Or, if there were guilt at all, it lay with the South Slavs who rejected the benefits of the "supernational state." For, since the war was a conflict of sovereign states, the fault was in nationalism and those who promoted it. The war itself was held to have been pointless or even worse. It had increased the number of nation-states, therefore made war more likely in the future. This condemnation of national independence by Anglo-Saxon historians was endorsed by German writers, who were also critical of national independence for reasons of their own. The phrases about international anarchy, the Balkanisation of eastern Europe, and the injustice of Versailles, provided the cover under which German revisionism could operate; and the well-meaning liberal historians of the first German war became the guilty men of the second.

The second German war gave a demonstration on the continent of Europe of what it would have been like to lose the first. Yet the history of the generation before 1914 is still being taught in schools and Universities with the aid of books which lay down that there was nothing to choose between the two sides and that the war was a muddle, with nothing of value at stake. Professor Mansergh's survey of the period is the first sign of a more realistic view. It is not a very important or profound book; indeed it is a reflection on the inadequacy of our historical works that it should be welcome at all. It is no more than a series of popular lectures, written with the aid of books by the old school of historians whose views are rejected in the text. Thus, Mr. Mansergh pays glowing tribute to Professor Fay in the preface yet finds his apology for German action "hardly credible" when he gets to the details of 1908; and judgments of Brandenburg, the German liberal, are rightly dismissed as "singularly unconvincing" and "clearly nonsense." All the same, Mr. Mansergh only escaped from the older views as he went along. When he started out, he was still content to condemn "power politics" (though the only alternative is powerless politics, as British policy has often shown). By the end he comes down to more practical issues and sees the war as a struggle to prevent the unification of Europe under German suzerainty. I suspect that he still hankers after a United Europe and would be slow to admit that a united continent would be a continent dominated by Germany.

The real theme of the generation before 1914 is the loss of the Balance of Power and the attempt to recover it. As Mr. Mansergh rightly says, there was no Balance of Power in 1878, or in the years thereafter: Bismarck ran the continent and kept it quiet for his own purposes. When Bismarck was succeeded by Germans less wise and moderate, France and Russia revolted and came together to preserve their independence of action; finally England threw her weight, somewhat doubtfully, into the same scale. France and Russia, reinforced first by England and then by America, just did the trick; but only France knew what it was they had done. France really cared for national independence, her own and that of others. The Russians were quite indifferent to "the liberties of Europe," if Europe would leave them undisturbed to build their Empire in Asia; and the British were not much better. Joseph Chamberlain in 1898, like Neville Chamberlain in 1938, would have been delighted to see Germany keeping Europe in order, so long as the British Empire was left alone and German domination was conducted in a reasonably civilised manner. Anglo-Saxon thinkers have rarely admitted that national independence is an absolute value, except when their own has been called in question. This contempt for the freedom of others was to be expected of the Right; it seems stranger on the Left. There is a simple explanation. Anglo-Saxon radicals, from the Manchester school to the Fabians, have always tended to put peace and prosperity first and to suppose that then freedom would be added unto them. Secure in this island or on the American continent, they found it easy to insist that the inhabitants of Europe should drop their tiresome national quarrels in order to achieve the blessings of a peaceful, planned continent. They failed to see that Europe could be united only by putting all Europe under Germany; and the great historical service of the Germans was to behave so intolerably as to make a united Europe, peaceful and planned, an impossibility for a long time to come.

The days before 1914, when Germany seemed heading for the mastery of Europe, now seem infinitely remote; I suppose I am the only person in the British Isles who still regards the Germans as the greatest danger for the future and as the nation most likely to cause a third world war. But even if the German danger be over, the problem has only been shifted from a European to a world theatre. Just as Europe could only be united by being brought under German domination, so the world can be united only by being put under the domination of the United States. Those who oppose this domination rate national freedom as a higher value than peace, just as the French and the Russians did before 1914. The British helped

to bring on the war of 1914 by failing to make up their mind until too late which they rated more highly; and now we are trying to dodge the issue again. It cannot be dodged indefinitely; and when the challenge to national independence becomes clearer, it will also become clear that the Balance of Power is the only way to maintain it. Then will follow the switch from the stronger to the weaker side, just as Great Britain switched from the German to the Franco-Russian side between 1898 and 1907. If the switch is done with full awareness of the issues, it might be possible to preserve peace at the same time; more probably it will be done with the same muddle, and with the same outcome, as before 1914. For national freedom, being the highest of political values, must be paid for at a higher price than any other; this was the lesson, not adequately learnt, of the first German war. A. J. P. TAYLOR

## THE UNRELIABLE CLASSIC

**Tintoretto:** The Paintings and Drawings. By HANS TIETZE. *Phaidon Press.* 25s.

The Venetian XVIth century has come to mean as much to many of us as Periclean Athens did to our grandfathers—æsthetically, at least. There is indeed something to be said for the thesis that it represents the supreme achievement of European genius in the Christian era. The appearance, therefore, of this new work on Tintoretto, in which for the first time almost the whole of his vast production is reproduced, must be for any person of sensibility an event both of importance and of pleasure.

Yet, when Herr Tietze's massive and handsome volume has lain for a week or so in one's hands, is one any the richer? Does one not feel a shameful sense of relief as one squeezes out a hole for it among one's books of reference? Just the thing, one says, if ever, for instance, one may wish to compare the splendid Vienna version of "Susanna and the Elders," now in the Tate, to the Madrid example. But Leviathan still lies there on the beach, and Herr Tietze has done no more than give us respectful statistics of his dimensions.

Certain great artists—Mantegna, Greco, Bernini—are consistent, their texture always uniform. Among their collections of antique marbles, their private orchestras, in the absurd hubbub of their princely journeys, the lineaments of genius suddenly, unforgettably appear. Not so with Tintoretto. Crowded into an obscure canal, caught in the assembly line of the studio into which he seems to have impressed all his relatives of talent, he eludes capture; no endearing foible—unless you count as such his habit of undercutting Veronese in his estimates and copying his great rival's manner when he thought it politic—has come down to us. The youthful self-portrait in the Victoria and Albert, the venerable one in the Louvre, alike indicate a character tentative, one would say, to the point of inanity. Yet no lack of assurance softens the Blake-like fury of the "Creation of the Animals" (Venice: Accademia) dating from the early years, nor blurs the "Gathering of the Manna" (Venice: San Giorgio Maggiore) from the latter end of this great and obscure career. Possibly, Tintoretto, like Christopher Wren, was an incomplete creature when out of action. The fact remains that no hint, no shameful notebook, survives to suggest the existence of anyone other than a hard-working journeyman-painter, only too capable of turning out the needed acreage of "Ascensions" and "Last Suppers" and "Ledas." Then suddenly, like the discovery of a brandy-bottle in a saint's cupboard, we are exposed to the shock of the "Removal of the Body of St. Mark" (Venice: Accademia).

Surely here are the materials for the most enthralling of all detective stories, the forging of the chain of evidence to connect the apparently smug and colourless Venetian bourgeois with the majestic fourth-dimensional frenzies of his supreme moments? Alas! Herr Tietze sees no oddity, no mystery in Tintoretto; he only observes a hero, and hero-worship prevents him from casting any new light upon the gigantic shape. He is content, in the fashionable jargon of the international art-critic, to tell the old familiar stories of the quarrel with Titian, and the sneaking admiration for him, to go over again the famous question of Titian's colour and Michaelangelo's form, or the influence of Schiavone and Paris Bordone upon the young painter's development.

The reproduction in some three hundred plates of almost the entire *opus* of Tintoretto (not to speak of several works as like as not by other hands) was obviously a labour of considerable love and homage; it was inspired, so Herr Tietze tells us, by the splendours of the Tintoretto exhibition held in Venice in 1937. But just as one visitor at least to that exhibition went away from it with mixed feelings, so now I am inclined to doubt whether Herr Tietze's act of piety, inevitable and necessary though it may be, was entirely felicitous. Tintoretto is not on the list of those to whom one can with utter confidence surrender oneself on every occasion. Innumerable contemporary anecdotes testify to his own consciousness of a performance far from even. His vision was obviously sublime only by fits and starts. Certain painters—Carpaccio, Breughel and Picasso are classic examples—first construct a supernatural world, and then set the whole of their subsequent achievement within its frontiers. Not so Tintoretto. Tossed on the tempest of his own temperament, he is blown from one dimension to another, now getting caked with the religious and mythological *clichés* of his time, now rising clean to the ultimate stars. The truth is, to use a critical *cliché* infinitely more tiresome, Tintoretto's achievement, in contrast with the modest and serene "classicism" of Veronese, was "romantic" in its very inconsistencies, which may well explain some of Ruskin's preference for him. Would that preference have stayed so strong had Ruskin been given the chance—as some of us have—of examining the San Rocco paintings at close quarters before they were put back into place after the war?

Yet when you have discounted the circumstances in which Tintoretto worked at the Scuola San Rocco, or on those vast official canvases in the Doge's Palace, how great he remains at his best! We have at the moment a chance of studying some of his masterful work in the loan exhibitions from Vienna and Munich—notably the "Susanna and the Elders," to which I have already referred, and the exquisite "Venus, Vulcan, Mars and Cupid," from Munich, now at the National Gallery. But English collections are not notably rich in the finest manifestations of his genius; for this reason, if for no other, we must be grateful for this monumental work, published at the modest sum of twenty-five shillings.

SIMON HARCOURT-SMITH

## THE INWARD TRANSFORMATION

**The Labyrinth.** By EDWIN MUIR. *Faber.* 8s. 6d.

There is a little poem in Mr. Muir's new volume that has alternately fascinated and baffled me since I first came across it in a magazine a good many years ago. It exhibits his peculiar elusive simplicity. It seems, indeed, almost vapidly simple. And yet, after knowing it for years, I am not at all sure that I know what it means; and the interpretation of it that I am going to offer seems, even to myself, far-fetched. It is an interpretation, however, that does seem to square with Mr. Muir's theory and practice of poetry as I understand them. This is the poem:

Our tears have mingled with the rain,
Our cries have vanished on the wind,
Time has carried away our pain.

These are our houses, calm and blind
With permanence of polished stone
That paints indifference on the mind.

Beyond their walls, outlawed, alone,
Our muted sorrows smoulder and start,
The lonely tear, the silent groan.


# Christopher Johnson

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How well they keep themselves apart.
Oh, what we know and what we see
Are separate as head and heart,

And all our sorrow a memory.

I take the houses to be Mr. Muir's own poems. They are impassive memorials of a human grief that continues to exist and act outside of them—and it is not, of course, the business of poetry to make us weep or groan, or to have that sort of crude, direct physical effect on us. Raw feelings are outlawed from the self-contained world of poetry; the poet is not expressing his raw feelings but transforming them into something quite different, something that will not smoulder and start, but will stand solidly by itself. In the good poet, his life and art are separate. His poems do not reflect his life (the houses are "calm and blind.") They are like the monads of Leibniz, that have no windows on the outer world, yet in their internal structure contain that world, with an individual difference. And in poetry all sorrow is a memory. The poet, that is, does not seek for an "objective correlative" for his emotions. He deals with emotions already transformed, as memory transforms them; with emotions no longer seeking to act on the world. And this, for instance, would no doubt be Mr. Muir's defence against critics who accused him, as one might sometimes feel inclined to accuse him, of a lack of immediacy. He would say that too much immediacy spoils the poem.

The lack of immediacy can be felt when, very occasionally, Mr. Muir allows himself a topical reference, as in his long poem in this volume on a city under a dictatorship:

If you see a man
Who smiles good-day or waves a lordly greeting
Be sure he's a policeman or a spy.
We know them by their free and candid air.

Wise and sad as these words are, they seem to come from an immense distance. Yet the fault of many fine modern poets is precisely the opposite one, that of excessive immediacy. We can all think of good poems flawed by passages that seem to come from a headline, from a speech, or from a very private letter; or others flawed by excessive fidelity to the confusions of dreams. Even in his slight remoteness of mood and diction, Mr. Muir should be, for many young poets, a corrective example. He follows his own interior path but with a respect for common speech and experience and for traditional poetic modes. Mr. Muir has never written, and is never likely to write, a topically exciting work—like, say, *The Waste Land* or *The Orators*—nor is it his aim, like that of some of the young romantics (though he would call himself a romantic, I think), to dredge up, in rank and glistening luxuriance, whatever lies tangled beneath the surface of the mind. He is neither a ranging nor a rich poet. His qualities are sobriety, depth, patience. They are not such common qualities that we can afford to ignore him, even if he can teach us no new technical tricks. He can perhaps teach us the reticent good manners that belong partly to a decaying province and partly to a vanishing Europe; and the loyalty to a great tradition that keeps him, as a poet, whole in his mind, even in a time of general disaster.

His poems stand by themselves. Thus, when in a poem on the death of a child, we come on such a stanza as this, the dying child speaking to the world:

You are so great, and I so small:
I am nothing, you are all:
Being nothing, I can take this way.
Oh I need neither rise nor fall,
For when I do not move at all
I shall be out of all your day,

it is unnecessary, indeed irrelevant to ask what beliefs about life after death the poet has in mind, and whether one agrees with them. Behind the feeling of these lines there does lie, I think, a particular religious tradition, the Protestant pietism of Scotland and Germany; behind the thought, the subtle play on "nothing" and "all", there may lie a type of German existentialism, itself partly derived from that tradition. But the lines are moving, whatever one thinks about death. The crude, particular arithmetic of our outward creeds and notions has been transformed by Mr. Muir into a quite generalised inward poetic algebra. The famous problem of the relation of poetry to belief does not arise. The lines work for anyone who has a notion of what it would be like to be a child, and to be dying; that is, for anyone who matters. All that Mr. Muir asks of his readers is that they should be receptive to inward experience.

Mr. Muir is not the kind of poet to exert a technical influence on others: which is why, perhaps, he has never formed a school. Young poets go to older poets for dodges. Yet few poets of our time—one thinks, in company with him, of Graves, of Frost, and of Ransom—have a more individual voice or a more mature wisdom. Like all poetic wisdom, Mr. Muir's is troubling. The language of these new poems, with their recurrent images of loss and search, will trouble many readers, and yet seem familiar to them, too: since it is in fact the language of inner experiences that are familiar to all of us and that most of us do not attempt to put into words. If we want to keep Mr. Muir's own balance, his sad and strict perspective, in a shaking world, it is a language we should try to learn. G. S. FRASER

## LAST WORDS

**An Outline of Psychoanalysis.** By SIGMUND FREUD. *Hogarth.* 8s. 6d.
**Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality.** By SIGMUND FREUD. *Imago Publishing Co.* 10s. 6d.

Freud was eighty-two, suffering from a painful cancer, and living in exile in a strange country when he undertook to write a short epitome of his life's work. Whatever the quality of the book had been, the fact of undertaking it at all is a most remarkable example of the resilience and vitality of the serene human spirit which must command admiration and even envy. In point of fact, the *Outline of Psychoanalysis*, though it is not quite finished, completely fulfils its author's aim: "to bring together the doctrines of psychoanalysis and to state them, as it were, dogmatically—in the most concise form and in the most positive terms. Its intention is naturally not to compel belief or to establish conviction." No popular summary has encompassed the same aim with such clarity and lucidity; and none has approached it either in brevity or humility:

> It may be that there are other undreamt-of possibilities of therapy. But for the moment we have nothing better at our disposal than psychoanalysis, and for that reason, in spite of its limitations, it is not to be despised.

This epitome illustrates both the breadth and the limitations of Freud's genius. A recluse himself, he never took into consistent account the fact that the vast majority of people live in a most complete nexus of social relationships, rather than in the isolated family which he uses as the model of human life. He admits the influence of ancestors to an extent which would shock most orthodox Freudians (Freud himself was never fully orthodox), for he states that some dream material must be regarded as "part of the *archaic heritage* which a child brings with him into the world, before any experience of his own, as a result of the experiences of his ancestors"; but he tends consistently to neglect the influence of the neighbours. An even greater limitation is the fact that he never really understood women as he understood men. He was born, brought up and lived in a period, a class, and a country where women were handicapped to an extent seldom paralleled in human history; and his whole reconstruction of the female psyche is based on the unspoken premise that no human being would willingly be a woman if it could help it. He saw woman as a mutilated man, and posited "penis-envy" as a central determinant in the development of the feminine psyché. Undoubtedly he found much evidence for this

among the middle-class European women who furnished most of his data; but it is remarkable that he never developed a concept of its reciprocal—what one might perhaps call "womb-envy," male envy of the life-giving power of women—though this forms the central theme of many of the rites and initiation ceremonies of primitives (notably Melanesians and Australians), from whose reported behaviour he derived so many other hypotheses.

In the popular view, which is now almost a music-hall joke, Freud's writings and teachings treat almost exclusively of sex. In point of fact, Freud wrote remarkably little about adult overt sexual behaviour; apart from a few short papers, his only work dealing directly with the subject is the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. This short study was originally published in 1905, but Freud was continually revising it in the light of his other discoveries and theories. The final edition, which differs very greatly from the first one, has not hitherto been available in English. Though not one of Freud's most important or original works, it is an indispensable one; and the translation by James Strachey is both clear and elegant, as also is Mr. Strachey's translation of the admirable *Outline of Psychoanalysis*.

GEOFFREY GORER

## PIONEERS

**Ghost Town on the Yellowstone.** By ELLIOT PAUL. *Cresset Press*. 12s. 6d.

**Wobbly.** By RALPH CHAPLIN. *University of Chicago: Cambridge University Press*. 27s. 6d.

The American West is full of ghosts. "The cowards never started" says a sign on the California border, "and the weak died on the way." You can still see the tracks of pioneer wagons on the crust of the Great Salt Lake or wander into a shanty-town in the mountains, now abandoned to the rats, where fortunes were gambled away in a night and the great ones of the stage were once glad to get engagements at the opera house. A ruined cabin is the only memorial to a wretched Swede, lured from his home by the promises of railway promoters, who tried to homestead in a cruel waterless valley in Montana. Miners, immigrants, cattlemen, hoboes and farmers all went West, as Horace Greeley advised, to grow up with the country; the attempt killed some, ruined many and toughened those that survived. Mr. Paul, who worked as a youth on a Federal irrigation project in Montana, and Mr. Chaplin, who is one of the few leaders of the rip-roaring Industrial Workers of the World still left to tell its tale, both belong to the generation of pioneers which tried to tame the West at the beginning of this century.

The township of Trembles, which existed for only fifteen years, was founded accidentally in 1907, when the wheel of a stage-coach crossing a dry coulee was ripped off by a flash flood, depositing the passengers under a clump of aspens on the bank. One of the travellers, who was on his way to open a saloon in the next town, liked the place, set up business in a tent and before long Trembles was a going concern, with a hotel, two saloons, a brothel, a general store and a school. Mr. Paul, a fellow-passenger of the saloon-keeper, became a founding father of the town, though he was only in his 'teens. As he was employed at a government camp nearby for the next two years, he had ample opportunity to observe how Trembles grew and lived. His entertaining book records the early history of this pioneer community.

Montana, it is said, is like hell: all it needs is water. In summer, the similarity is striking. In winter, it can be a frozen hell. Between these extremes, the weather plays all the practical jokes in the almanac. A man needs a streak of eccentricity to stay there. To succeed as a pioneer, he also needed courage, a sense of humour and a real capacity for sharing his neighbour's troubles. Mr. Paul's friends, about whom he writes with such affection, had all these qualities. Their life was hard, but it was boisterous and colourful. Trembles met smallpox in its stride, saw that a citizen on his annual drunk came to no harm, teased but helped the innocents and, when some Chinese were stranded over their New Year in a blizzard, gave itself over to a whole week's celebration in Chinese style to make its unexpected visitors feel at home. Mr. Paul's description of this festival is one of the highspots of his story. Trembles paid its debts, exchanged presents, had haircuts, drank *ng ga far*, took steam baths and, in the blinding snow, manfully paraded behind the dragon with the tiger's head. Mr. Paul, it is clear, had a hell of a time in Trembles and, in exchange for his stories—especially that of the mail-order wife obtained for the homesteader, Johnny Highpockets—the reader can accept long and detailed accounts of conversations that took place more than forty years ago. Fiction or fact, they fascinate.

There were "Wobblies" in Mr. Paul's construction camp, itinerant workers preaching the I.W.W. doctrine of industrial revolt and One Big Union. They wandered through the lumber camps, mines, harvest fields and textile mills in the early part of the century, organising strikes, putting fight into the workers, teaching them to form unions and opposing the craft theories of the American Federation of Labour with a concept of industrial organisation. They, too, were pioneers.

Mr. Chaplin, an artist and the author of many of the Wobbly songs, including *Solidarity For Ever*—the American equivalent of our *Red Flag*—has tried to tell the story of the I.W.W., in which he played a prominent role. His book is a disappointment, though it contains a great deal of material previously unpublished. In the last ten years or so, he turned his back upon his revolutionary and atheist past, becoming a supporter of the extreme Right of American Labour, devoting his energies to fighting the Communists and finally being converted to Christianity. This *volte-face* colours many of his judgments, for he has to make his analysis justify his own change in outlook. There is, consequently, far too much of Mr. Chaplin in his book and too little about the Wobblies. Radical memoirs, of course, are an invaluable source, both for historians and psychologists. The latter will find fascinating details about Mr. Chaplin's family, his soul and similar matters which occupy the autobiographer. But his literary capacity and his record empowered him to be the historical executor of the Wobblies, and he has evaded the task. Admittedly, it is difficult to tell the story of a movement composed largely of migrants, who seldom stayed long in one place or organised branches in the normal sense. Go to the old Wobbly strongholds in the North-West to-day and you find no trace of their bitter struggles. Coeur d'Alene is now a sleepy little town in Idaho with nothing to show that once more than a thousand striking miners were put into a concentration camp. The Wobblies were sparks in the tinder of a tough proletariat, dispossessed in the Marxist sense. When the wealth of expanding America permitted the assimilation of millions of workers and gave them a stake in the system, the Wobbly was isolated. Many of his leaders, including Big Bill Haywood, went over to Communism. Others, such as Mr. Chaplin, drifted around for years on the fringes of the Labour Movement, unable to find a home, restless, cynical and frustrated.

The Wobbly episode, with its heroism and its crudity, was really a "frontier" revolt. Sparsely equipped with theory, the Wobblies made up for that in class fervour and organising genius. But, by insisting that politics corrupted the working-class, by concentrating upon the rootless, the foreign-born and other minorities, and by winning tactical battles without a workable strategy for the war against Capitalism, they doomed themselves to becoming an army of valiant skirmishers. Mr. Chaplin would have done a great service if he had told this story analytically as it needs to be told. Only a Wobbly, however, could have written this book, in which the individual obscures the movement.

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This is the 20th year of our great business as a public company, although 10 years previously, as a private company, those solid foundations were laid on which we have been building ever since. Our Founder, as you all know was Frank Smith, who every one is delighted to know, is still directing the business with unabated energy and skill. Our quality and our standards have never changed.

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The report was adopted.

Company Meeting

## ODHAMS PRESS

FURTHER PROGRESS

The twenty-ninth annual general meeting of Odhams Press, Limited, was held on July 8 in London.

Mr. Arthur G. Cousins, C.B.E., the chairman, in the course of his speech, said :—Our total gross revenue amounted to the substantial sum of £13,188,674. Notwithstanding the effect of a ten days' stoppage at our Manchester works, which seriously affected the production of newspapers, the revenue for the year was half a million pounds up on the previous year. This rise in turnover was mainly due to the necessity of increasing our printing charges, to the increase in our advertisement rates, and to increased sales of our periodicals. The trading profit is slightly down by £42,501. In view of the difficult conditions experienced in 1948, this must be considered satisfactory. The net profit after taxation shows an increase of £107,364.

Our chief periodicals continue to make progress. Among them I would mention "John Bull" with a sale in excess of a million copies each week, "Illustrated," also over a million each week and "Woman" with a million and a quarter each week.

As to newspapers, "The Daily Herald" has a sale in excess of two million copies every day of publication and "The People," our weekly newspaper, has a sale of well over four-and-a-half million copies each week. "The Sporting Life" also has a large and influential circulation. Our book department again made a useful contribution to the total revenue and profits.

The report was adopted.

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## A CATHOLIC GRANDMOTHER

**Recollections of a Northumbrian Lady, 1815-1866.** Edited by L. E. O. CHARLTON. *Cape.* 15*s.*

In many a family's cupboard beside the skeleton lies something far more pathetic—grandmother's old diary. What should be done with it? Burnt? Left where it is for future generations to decide? Or thrown open to the public at fifteen shillings a volume? Air Commodore Charlton has given grandmother the benefit of the doubt and, with the courage and bravado of his Border ancestry, unlocks her cupboard.

Courage was required. For, at a first glance, Barbara Charlton's storehouse looks as bare as old Mother Hubbard's. She writes in no particular style, she displays no originality of mind, she took part in no historical events and, in fact, led as conventional and insipid a life in her North of England home as any other Catholic lady of her time. Not even a sniff of a skeleton! If she had any cognisance of such a thing she is mum on the subject. Without the least wish to disparage I must say that she reminds me in her prudery, her dullness and self-complacency of what I remember of my own Victorian grandmother. There are two portraits in the book. The first a painting of Barbara as a young married woman, very attractive, but, if you look close enough, not very nice. The second, a photograph at the age of 82 after fifty years of Victorian habits have left their mark, the shut face of an old idol, who has never felt quite sufficiently worshipped.

Barbara's story can be told in few words. Her father came of an Old Catholic family in Yorkshire and was a tyrant: her mother was also an Old Catholic, and a fool. Barbara herself was educated in a French convent and turned out as hard as nails. In 1839, at the age of twenty-four, she escaped from the sordid grip of her father by a runaway match with William Charlton of Hesleyside in Northumberland, who came of another Old Catholic family. From then, until this volume closes, she lived as a country gentleman's wife in Northumberland, bringing up three sons and three daughters. There is never a gleam of romance in her life: her heart was as cool as her head. Even her Gretna Green marriage was actuated by self-interest: Mr. Charlton was heir to large estates.

The monotonous details of matrimonial intrigues, squabbles, junketings, even occasional brutalities of Northumbrian Catholics, in which these memoirs abound, are too trivial in content and too feeble in description to merit the permanence of print. "Not long after the race-week Death was busy with our blithesome Brighton party" is the kind of sentence she employs. The veiling of a naked statue in pink georgette to spare a visitor's modesty, or a pinprick "in a tender place" administered to her by Algernon Swinburne, when the poet was three years old, is the sort of episode she is proud to recall. Yet the sum total of Barbara's naive confidences makes a useful contribution to anthropology.

The tribal customs of Old Catholic society a hundred years ago were peculiar. To begin with, the Old Catholic families had become so bigoted from persecution that they always employed servants on religious grounds; with the result that the governesses knew nothing, the butlers drank, the footmen stole, the gardener ran an illicit still, and all the Irish maids went in for immorality, the only reliable member of the staff being the Protestant housekeeper. The children of the house in consequence grew up boorish and uneducated. The boys took to drink and horseplay; while the girls, if they had any looks, were trained like hawks to swoop down on London during the season and pick up some fat pigeon—Catholic for choice, but a Protestant would do, if he were fat enough and might be plucked eventually of his faith. The aggrandisement of Catholicism appeared to be the main purpose of them all. Yet when the Oxford Movement led to a stream of conversion, the Old Catholics burst out in indignation. It was not for Cardinal Manning to rule over them that they had borne the burden and heat o the Test Acts. Under the stress of jealousy and disappointment something more primitive than their medieval faith broke surface; and the Old Catholics of Northumberland betrayed their ultimate allegiance, not to the Triple Crown of St. Peter, but to the pagan totem-pole of the clan.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

## THOUGHTS IN HELL

**Day After Day.** By ODD NANSEN. *Putnam.* 21*s.*

An S.S. man weeping as he recounts the last message of an executed Norwegian patriot; a German guard asking an internee not to make him feel uncomfortable by saluting him. On the other hand, a Norwegian prisoner regards unmoved the sufferings of the Jews in Sachsenhausen concentration camp, and comments, "It serves them right. Always stealing, always cheating and swindling." This man had a padlocked cupboard crammed with enough food for months, while people about him were literally starving.

The observer of such contrasts between the occasional good in the worst men and the frequent bad in the best is Odd Nansen, architect, son of the famous Norwegian explorer and statesman. This book is his diary for three and a half years from January, 1942, when he was arrested by the Nazis as a hostage. Written for his wife, without thought of publication, it was ingeniously smuggled out section by section, even from Sachsenhausen, where he was sent in October, 1943. The seventeen illustrations are from his drawings. The translation reads fluently and colloquially.

Perhaps because of the remarkable humanistic faith which enabled him to look steadily at heroism and martyrdom and evil alike, Nansen retained a sense of humour. Thus, "One soon gets familiar with the yelling. It is really worst for themselves. It must be a strain on the throat and vocal chords." He records with sardonic pleasure the Germans' hopeless inefficiency and the futility of their tyranny. For instance, just when by innumerable restrictions they had prevented the internees from getting anything in, the Germans themselves took over the smuggling not only of food and tobacco but also of illegal letters.

It was bad enough in the Norwegian camps, however. After sixteen months Nansen and a friend were sent for by the camp commandant. Hope blazed up. Crazy hope.

> It was like a kind of cattle-show. There we stood, stiff, solemn and silent, and on the wall a little distance off I'm blessed if there wasn't another animal. But it was dead, and a dark-red stream of blood was running down the wall on to the gravel. A German had just cut the poor thing's throat with a knife requisitioned from the kitchen. It was a roe-deer. No doubt the big bugs had observed it from the car window as they were driving over—and then I suppose these bold huntsmen, with a noble gusto, had by their united exertions and firearms managed to destroy the nimble little creature—so rare in these parts. There it lay on the stone wall in a dark-red pool of blood, a strange background to the little inquiry which now followed.

Nothing came of it. The brutality and stupidity went on. Still, he was kept going and a bit more by visits from his wife and children. But then the camp chief turned against him, and Nansen was sent to Sachsenhausen. Going one day to see a friend in hospital he passed a stretcher with a corpse on it left in the middle of a path :

> A corner of the blanket had been blown aside and uncovered a grinning, purple face, emaciated and staring. The accompaniment to this idyll was a steady stream of chattering prisoners, who took no notice of the stretcher with the corpse, and an ear-splitting dance-tune from the loud-speakers all over the camp. When I returned, the corpse was still there and the stream of prisoners was passing the other way, noisy and jabbering

as ever. The loud-speaker blared on as before, the infuriated porter—a prisoner like ourselves—was belabouring and cursing a poor Ukrainian, and the purple face of the corpse was staring up at the rainy sky.

Horror after horror of degradation and corruption, including that of his compatriots, whose "Nordic" blood and frequent gift parcels made them an élite. But he had to go on recording, so that people outside would know what happened and might act to prevent further misery. For Odd Nansen's trust is not in vindictiveness, hate, revenge and retribution. He pleads in a noble postscript for the defeated countries to be given a fair chance since it is their people who must rebuild Europe

> . . . along with you and me. If they sink, we sink as well. Through the work of rescue our faith in human values will be revived. The worst crime you can commit to-day, against yourself and society, is to forget what happened and sink back into indifference. What happened was worse than you have any idea of—and it was the indifference of mankind that let it take place.

WALTER MARSDEN

## NEW NOVELS

**The Holiday.** By STEVIE SMITH. *Chapman & Hall.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

**The Lion Roars.** By ROBERT PAYNE. *Heinemann.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

**See You in the Morning.** By KENNETH PATCHEN. *Grey Walls Press.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

**Chit of a Girl.** By GEORGES SIMENON. *Routledge* 9*s.* 6*d.*

In case there are still people who read novels but have not read Stevie Smith, let me say that, if you choose to liken modern fiction to a desert, she is among the major oases, with Compton-Burnett, Henry Green, Bowen, Pritchett and (remembering *The Aunt's Story*) Patrick White. She is a wit and a poet—I should say that Blake has had more influence on her than anyone else; her colloquialism partly derives from him. Her sensibility and very individual outlook make her a sort of human antenna for perceiving the climate, atmosphere, uneasiness of our time; and her grasp of language enables her to express these with enough truth to give them universality. Incidentally, by present price-standards, this book is very cheap.

It is difficult not to identify Miss Smith with her heroine, who tells *The Holiday* in the first person. Celia lives in a suburb of London with the Lion Aunt of *Novel on Yellow Paper*, and works in a Ministry with Tiny, who is the victim of persecution by his elder twin brother Clem; this odious person's talk is brilliantly reported. Celia has a mad cousin Tom, who loves her, and another cousin Caz, whom she loves, but who is suspected of being her step-brother. Tom tries to strangle Celia. Then she, Tiny and Caz go for their holiday to Uncle Heber, a parson in Lincolnshire, who is Tom's father. Celia there attempts suicide by drowning. Clem arrives at dead of night in pursuit of Tiny, but Heber has already persuaded Tiny to leave.

Now this summary makes *The Holiday* sound sensational and melodramatic which it is not. For instance, the attempted murder is, in the actor's sense, thrown away. Events which might have seemed violent are eddies in the stream of Celia's ruminations and discussions; only once, in a scene of communal hysteria on page 135, does a clot form in the texture of the book. Celia's low spirits (she cries more than anyone else in life or fiction) do not interfere with her brilliant intelligence, nor with her wit, nor with her intense enjoyment of natural beauty:

> The place where we are now is drenched in sunlight, this sunshine has the quality of the eternal, it is absolutely classical. We are on a little promontory, where the low cliffs stand out a little way into the sea; the soft grass on top of the cliffs is speckled with flowers, the flowers that my cousin will not let me pick.

What marks *The Holiday* as an advance upon *Novel On Yellow Paper* is an increase in ambition—the fact that one of its characters is a saint. The Lion Aunt was a heroic as well as a heraldic figure: Uncle Heber is wise and good. What is more difficult to convey, and what more worth while? We are given but two glimpses of him which make a strong impression—an account of a sermon which Celia hears him preach "about taking no thought for the morrow, and Be not over-anxious," and some remarks he makes to her. (I should explain that Miss Smith suppresses inverted commas.)

> Uncle says he notices that I am fretful . . . that he supposes I have been associating with persons who expect an answer. There is no answer, he says: You would not expect an answer? No, no, I say, feeling at once immensely lightened.

So far, so good; but if, as I believe, Heber was intended to dominate the book, there should have been more of him. One so much wants more that it is hard not to resent Celia's determination to be the centre of the picture, clever and amusing though she is.

*The Lion Roars* has something in common with Miss Smith's second novel, *Over The Frontier*, in that both were conceived in a mode of fantasy, and by fantasy I do not mean whimsey. But in the case of Mr. Payne, it is a strong visual sense which is the distinguishing feature. Without being very good, this novel is good enough to awaken speculation concerning him and his future work. The main part of the story is set in East Africa, where the little boy Lanny's father is a missionary, already eccentric, and destined to go mad. Everything is told from Lanny's point of view. His invalid mother, with her unsuitable toque, might have been merely grotesque had she been crudely sketched, but Mr. Payne has the skill to make her a touching figure. All Lanny's love centres on M'luku, a huge Nubian in the Allan Quartermaine tradition; but the physical surroundings of the stockade, the heat, colour and atmosphere, have an actuality far beyond Rider Haggard. After the death of Lanny's mother, whose funeral is a memorable scene, fantasy begins to encroach more and more on fact, so much so that the reader cannot always tell which is which. Nevertheless, the imaginative power of the writing kept me entranced.

*See You In The Morning* being by a poet, one might expect to find at least some command of language and an individual approach to the subject matter, even if the specific qualities of a novel-writer were absent. I have not read Mr. Patchen's poems. His prose consists very largely of clichés. The hero "looked like a young god striding down through the sun. Only his mouth was twisted into bitterness." "She was very tiny and infinitely real beside him." "It was the sort of kiss a man can only give a woman once in their lives." It was the sort of kiss a man can only give a woman in Flossie's Favourite. The theme of the novel matches well with this astonishing naivety: the young god has only a few months to live, having damaged his heart in athletics; he picks up a girl who has already fallen in love with him—a housemaid at a summer resort hotel in America—and takes her about. He falls in love with her, and they have a wonderful, tearful, time.

The enthusiasm of some intellectuals for the straight works of Simenon has always seemed to me exaggerated. He writes well, his dry comments are agreeable, he entertains, and, as far as they go, his characters convince; but all is seen from the outside, and the character-drawing does not go far enough to make one care what happens to them. For instance, in the second of the two longish stories which make up the present volume the setting of Le Lavandou and Nice is exquisitely done in brief; but the career of a petty gangster, his pursuit and trial for the murder of his mistress, which he did not commit, interest one no more than would a well-written, detailed newspaper report.

The first story, *Chit of a Girl*, is somewhat more ambitious in that Marie is a slightly ambiguous character. She is a very young waitress at a fishing port café who sets out coolly

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to entrap into marriage the prosperous man with whom her elder sister is living. At one moment she appears to be not only a scheming little piece, but to be attracted by him, and this adds a shadow of roundness to her portrait. The translation by Geoffrey Sainsbury is excellent. It is easy to forget how often translations from the French are haunted by stubborn turns of phrase alien to English. In all this book, I found only one, faint little phantom. E. B. C. JONES

## SWISS VIEWS

**Introduction to Switzerland.** By MAURICE CRANSTON. *Chaterson.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

**Swiss Life and Landscape.** By EMIL EGLI. Translation by ELEANOR BROCKETT. *Paul Elek.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Facts and figures about the politics and economics of a country can be stupefyingly dull, and in that part of Mr. Cranston's book where he deals with these things, he smacks them down on the paper as though he were dashing off an imposition set by a much despised master. But when he writes about the things that evidently interest him, Swiss life and culture, the towns and villages and their literary associations, winter sport and mountaineering, his pen slows down and he is lively; he begins a sentence with "still" less often, and less often ends one with "though." But the speed is still rapid. We are raced round the towns and lakes, and only recover our wind during several excellent anecdotes about the great visitors, Gibbon, Voltaire, and others. Interlaken receives this terse and fair-minded appraisal:

> Interlaken, though by way of being a watering-place, is the Clapham Junction of Switzerland, and one needs to be a railway enthusiast to appreciate it fully.

Up in the mountains it is easier to breathe, and to those who still use Switzerland as a playground, the last two chapters about the Alps and sport will be particularly helpful. They contain a number of tips for beginners of all kinds, including ski-babies, as they are apparently called; the English intelligentsia will find there the name of the village in the Engadine favoured by the English intelligentsia; and there also will be found the most beautiful words of encouragement that have been given to the faint-hearted since the publication of *Pilgrim's Progress*: "With the aid of two guides almost anyone can get to any summit."

M. Egli's book contains nearly as many facts and figures as Mr. Cranston's, but the Swiss writer, kinder to the customer, is blessed with the gift of investing them with poetry. In his Introduction we read and disbelieve: "This book seeks to inform without disenchanting." It is quite true. We are enchanted by the information which M. Egli gives us. Whenever he quotes statistics, he contrives to make them vivid in terms of human life. He reveals his country to us as a god might do it; he lifts us above the changing complexities of politics and economics and instructs us, district by district, in the simple conservative facts of geology and geography; we are made to see how in Switzerland—perhaps in Switzerland more than in any other country in the world—the accidents of nature have shaped the life and character of a people, and have caused a nation to evolve.

Though Switzerland is a loosely knit Confederation and though the languages of its powerful neighbours are spoken there, a Swiss national character exists and is remarkably idiosyncratic. The traveller who has not been forewarned will be surprised by this. He will look in vain for Gallic wit and German romanticism and Latin gaiety. He will wonder why the contours and the climate should be the only things that run to extremes, and why the beauty of the place, when it goes to his head, should stay there. And he will immediately correct his opinion of those English mothers who send daughters to be "finished" on the shores of Leman. But after a time the salubrity and efficiency and consummate mediocrity of everything Swiss will beguile him and rouse his curiosity; he will want to trace the connection between the temperament of this people and their environment and history. How lucky, therefore, that M. Egli has done this for him, and done it so excellently.

It should be mentioned, for the benefit of those who will make a choice, that, despite the great difference in price, these books are approximately the same length. The more expensive of the two contains ninety-four photographs: the cheaper only sixteen. One, Mr. Cranston's, provides an index, but no map: the other provides a map, but no index. MICHAEL RAMSBOTHAM

**The Lay of Love and Death of Cornet Christopher Rilke.** By RAINER MARIA RILKE. With a translation by Leslie Phillips and Stefan Schimanski. *Lindsay Drummond.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

During the first world war, this early prose-poem of Rilke's seems to have enjoyed much the same kind of cult among young German officers as *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* did among young English officers. The contrast is instructive. The melancholy of the *Rubaiyat* is gentler, its fatalism rational and even amused. The *Lay* is tormented, full of youthful self-pity, dreaming and bemused, its erotic romanticism closer to *Christabel, La Belle Dame Sans Merci,* the pre-Raphaelites and Swinburne, its technique, however, modern, its statement economical, elided and hallucinating like celluloid. One wonders how far it may have influenced some early German films. A German critic might be able to place it exactly in the history of German expressionism. This is a bi-lingual edition agreeably printed (but ill-bound) in Czechoslovakia, the translation a helpful crib. Mr. Schimanski's introduction supplies the necessary information about the poem's genesis and some views upon its significance. Its form he considers to be that of "a symphony in three movements in the Mozart style," which, after carefully weighing the evidence on both sides, the reviewer considers to be a very peculiar opinion.

**Physics Tells Why.** By OVERTON LUHR. *Allen & Unwin.* 16*s.*

**The Universe and Dr. Einstein.** By LINCOLN BARNETT. *Gollancz.* 5*s.*

These two books, each admirable of its kind, are at the two extremes of popularisation. The first is a book about how everyday things work. What raises it high above other books of its kind is its range, its accuracy, its orderliness; and running under these, the sustained and lucid enthusiasm of its author. Dr. Luhr was a young research worker who became consumptive, and wrote this book during his long last illness. He hardly had the makings of a remarkable physicist; but he plainly was a remarkable teacher. His is an excellent book with which to stave off the day when the children discover that you don't know; after which, you can give it to them.

The second book sketches the new and profound ideas which in the last fifty years have changed physics from top to bottom, and from the atom to the universe. It was first written for *Harper's;* the language is a little gaudy; but it is clear and cogent, and well thought out. Since Mr. Barnett keeps up a smart trot through his hundred pocket-sized pages, you must make up your mind to read some pages twice, or until you are sure you have them. But this is not a hardship. And you will certainly want to read twice the many delightful and penetrating illustrations which Mr. Barnett quotes from Einstein himself. Scientists in Princeton seldom gossip about anything except life in Einstein's latest imaginary lift. It is nice at last to have those wonderful lifts rocketing through space for the common reader, too. It is a sad comment on public demand and scientific supply here that both these books should come from America.


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## Week-end Competitions

No. 1,013

**Set by Farragon**

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION puts a team into the field to play a Test Match. Competitors are required to select an Eleven from the regular contributors, not forgetting, if necessary, the best players in Week-end Competitions, and to describe with telegraphic brevity the qualities of the players that justify the choice of the Selection Committee.

Entries by July 26.

## RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 1,010

**Set by Janet Adam Smith**

"Scorn not the Sonnet," "Nuns Fret Not"—Wordsworth wrote his two sonnets on sonnets composed by human beings. But, says Mr. W. A. Turing, describing the capacities of the Mechanical Brain lately constructed at Manchester University, "I do not think I can even draw the line about sonnets, though the comparison is perhaps a little unfair because a sonnet written by a machine will be better appreciated by another machine." The usual prizes are offered for a sonnet on the Mechanical Sonnet.

**Report by Janet Adam Smith**

"Sacrilege" shouted an eager pack of sonnetteers and fell upon the mechanical brain's pretensions with indignation, satire and mockery.

> This steely discord from a bloodless brain
> Must surely be thin, cold, remote, and void
> Of power to move. O give us once again
> The dying strain that living bards employed!

lamented G. J. Blundell. A note of pathos crept into H. J. R.

> Epics and Odes are good in their degree
> And solemn Elegies in eight and ten.
> Yet in these massive forms time and again
> The donkey-engines rival you and me.

Others could see possible virtues in a mechanical sonnet: surely the machine would at least produce impeccable rhyme and metre. Indeed some competitors took it as an occasion for venting spleen on This Modern Poetry. Willy Tadpole was firm:

> . . . May my sonnet be
> A lesson to all blunderers whose plea
> Is inspiration drawn from Marx and Freud,
> Declaring verse a thing to be enjoyed
> Sans metrical responsibility.

The voices of earlier sonnetteers were heard: Arganthus began strongly:

> Scorn not mechanics: Turing, you have frowned
> On man-made verse and sonnets; with this spanner
> Newton unlocked his heart . . .

Henry Walter and Hassall Pitman aptly remembered the million monkeys typewriting all the books in the British Museum. Confident familiarity with the workings of the mechanical brain, with the various parts of its monstrous entrails, was shown in the many entries which efficiently juggled cathode rays, electric impulses, watts, ohms and amps within their fourteen lines.

The first prize of three guineas goes to P. G. for his reassuring forecast of fallibility; and prizes of one guinea each to Dikh, Fergie and Pithecus. Honourably mentioned, Josh, Arganthus.

> The passion and the fervid mind's white heat—
> How primitive, how wasteful, to design
> A sonnet such as this machine takes 9
> .527 seconds to complete.
> No clouded meanings, no redundant feet,
> When myriad flashing cells permute, combine
> The sound and sense for every faultless line;
> But let me demonstrate—it's rather neat.
> Here set the subject, here select a rhyme;
> Through "Fine" and "Beautiful" upon the dial,

As impulses come throbbing through this grey wire,
The needle flickers upwards to " Sublime."
Results are guaranteed at every trial—
Except that now and again something or other
seems to get into the works and the whole thing
goes haywire. P. G.

Oh joy for joy! Mechanics now divulge
That words will tumble from unguided pen,
That mating Martians can now indulge
In lyric verse, as once were able men.
So be it then, with wavelength interchanged
The Brain Mechanical (and delicate)
With every subtle reflex so arranged
Its own mind-musings can appreciate.
And now I write of her as is her due,
Of all her sweet unlubricated ways
And in my measured impulses renew
Examples of uncomputated praise.
Then shall her beauty's fame an age o'erlap
When I am rust and have been sold for scrap.
DIKH

O modern poet seeking slithier toves,
Soon must thou cease to bumble in thy brain,
For momer raths, and mimsier borogroves
Than any thou hast known, are now in train.

If this machine, untiring, swift and sure,
The poet's hand at no stage intervening,
Selects from out the ambient obscure
The words that have the minimum of meaning.

And spins and weaves new concepts inconceivable,
New-spangled sonnets, balderdash in spate,
Warps, wefts and woofs of context unbelievable—
Poor handloom weaver, thou hast had it, mate.

Be easy, though: thou mightst have a defence.
Thou mightst, at that, go back to writing sense.
FERGIE

Note.—The Electronic Brain must be supplied with the elements of whatever it is required to deal with.

Tap digits in, and, even as your thumb
Flicks on the switch, the electronic brain,
Swifter than thought, will flash them out again
Through all the valves and circuits in the drum
Shuffled and ciphered to a final sum
That fifty actuaries would seek in vain,
Although they worked for years with ceaseless strain
Until their minds and fingers both were numb.

So, all ye poets, who for weeks must wait on
Your costive Muse, whom you have vainly beckoned,
Shove in Rossetti, Wyatt, Milton, Surrey,
Bowles, Spenser, Wordsworth, Shakespeare,
Sidney, Drayton,
And press the button. Gone is all your worry—
A hundred shuffled sonnets flow per second.
PITHECUS

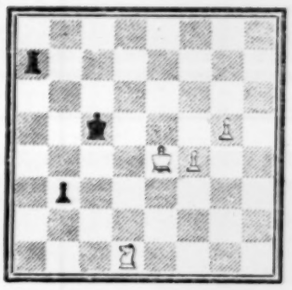
## CHESS: Don't Despise the Draw

Tournament players, of course, have a healthy respect for the scoring value of piling up ½ points; but among those of us who play mainly for fun, one frequently encounters a deeply rooted prejudice against the draw and, indeed, a readiness to risk almost certain loss rather than willingly to accept so "dull" a conclusion. However, if no mistakes are made on either side, a draw *is* the logical conclusion, and it certainly needn't be dull. Here (Hamppe-Meitner, Vienna 1872) is one most exciting draw.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1) P-K4 | P-K4 | (10) K x Q | Kt-B4 ch |
| (2) Kt-QB3 | B-B4 | (11) K-Kt4 | P-R4 ch |
| (3) Kt-R4 | B x P ch | (12) K x Kt | Kt-K2 |
| (4) K x B | Q-R5 ch | (13) B-Kt5 ch | K-Q1 |
| (5) K-K3 | Q-B5 ch | (14) B-B6 | P-Kt3 ch |
| (6) K-Q3 | P-Q4 | (15) K-Kt5 | Kt x B |
| (7) K-B3 | Q x KP | (16) K x Kt | B-Kt2 ch |
| (8) K-Kt3 | Kt-QR3 | (17) K-Kt5 | B-R3 ch |
| (9) P-QR3 | Q x Kt ch | (18) K-B6 | B-Kt2 ch |

Here—also a mere 18 moves—is one of the most "fighting" draws ever played, on the exciting occasion of Alekhine's and Botvinnik's first encounter (at Nottingham, 1936).

| Alekhine | Botvinnik | Alekhine | Botvinnik |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1) P-K4 | P-QB4 | (10) P-Kt4 | P-Q4 |
| (2) Kt-KB3 | P-Q3 | (11) P-B5 | B-B1 |
| (3) P-Q4 | P x P | (12) KP x P | Kt-Kt5 |
| (4) Kt x P | Kt-KB3 | (13) P-Q6 | Q x P |
| (5) Kt-QB3 | P-KKt3 | (14) B-B5 | Q-B5 |
| (6) B-K2 | B-Kt2 | (15) R-KB1 | Q x RP |
| (7) B-K3 | Kt-B3 | (16) B x Kt | Kt x P |
| (8) Kt-Kt3 | B-K3 | (17) B x Kt | Q-Kt6 ch |
| (9) P-B4 | O-O | (18) R-B2 | Q-Kt8 ch |

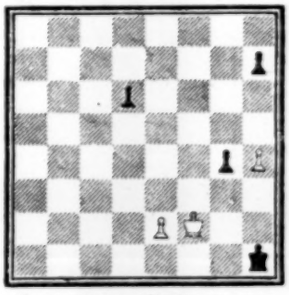


And here is the celebrated ending of Emanuel Lasker's "Marathon" against his namesake Edward at New York 1924. Capablanca, Alekhine and other famous experts, excitedly watching that ending, were prepared to bet 50 : 1 on a win for Black.

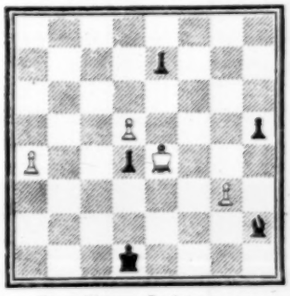
| Emanuel L. | Edward L. | Emanuel L. | Edward L. |
|---|---|---|---|
| (81) P-Kt6 | R-Q2 | (93) Kt-Kt2 | K-K5 |
| (82) Kt-Kt2 | R-Q7 | (94) Kt-R4 | K-Q5 |
| (83) K-B3 | R-Q1 | (95) Kt-Kt2 | R-KB6 |
| (84) K-K4 | R-Q7 | (96) Kt-R4 | R-K6 |
| (85) K-B3 | R-Q1 | (97) Kt-Kt2 | K-K5 |
| (86) K-K4 | K-Q3 | (98) Kt-R4 | K-B6 |
| (87) K-Q3 | R-QB1 | (99) K-R3 | K-K5 |
| (88) P-Kt7 | K-K3 | (100) K-Kt4 | K-Q5 |
| (89) P queens | R x Q | (101) Kt-Kt2 | R-R6 |
| (90) K-B4 | R-Kt6 | (102) Kt-R4 | K-Q6 |
| (91) Kt-R4 | K-B4 | (103) K x P | K-Q5 ch |
| (92) K-Kt4 | K x P | Abandoned as a draw | |

Since I have not annotated any of these games with as much as a ! !, competitors (for the usual prizes) are invited to provide their own comments as well as the conclusions of the following positions. Each of them is a draw, and in each it is White's move.

(Entries by July 25th.)



HENRY RINCK, Budapest 1912.



PAPE-ROTH, Löbau 1924

LARDIAS-ZEMITIS, Riga 1936

## RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 5

Some competitors presented Black as too much of a duffer, others gave more or less convincing proof of Black's difficulties when omitting P-QB4 and thereby gratuitously relaxing the tension in the centre. The consolation prize is shared by B. W. Clapp and H. Ainsworth. First prize for D. M. Peach whose entry (after the prescribed six opening moves) continues

| *Black* | *White* | *Black* | *White* |
|---|---|---|---|
| (7) Kt-B3 | O-O | (12) Kt-B4 | P-QR4 |
| (8) B-Q3 | QKt-B3 | (13) Q-Kt3 | P-QKt3 |
| (9) P-KR4 | P-B4 | (14) Kt-Kt5 | K-R1 |
| (10) Kt-K2 | R-K1 | (15) B x P | |
| (11) P-B3 | Kt-B1 | | |

and White will soon achieve either a smothered mate or decisive material gain. ASSIAG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